THE WAY TO WIN

JOHN W. FERGUSON

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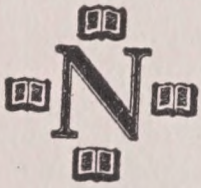

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By

JOHN W. FERGUSON

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CHAPTER I

Jack Hamilton was a New Yorker and his bachelor rooms were luxuriously furnished. He was alone and at his desk, absorbed in calculations and balance sheets. He went on with this work for a long time, when he threw down his pencil and, rising, said:

"Jack Hamilton, you are a failure and a fraud. Your father left you a handsome patrimony, of which fifty thousand dollars remains. When I unload these rooms, with their furnishings, pictures, bric-a-brac, *et cetera,* there will be, perhaps, ten thousand dollars more—and there's the sum total of your earthly possessions. Yet you are supposed to be worth several hundred thousand dollars. You can't go on, and what are you going to do about it?"

The soliloquy was interrupted with a rap on the door. Jack called, "Come in," and Sidney Livingstone entered. He was a jovial, good fellow. He came into the room and, looking around, said:

"Why, Jack, I thought I heard you talking to someone—not talking to yourself, eh?"

"Well, Sid, a man can't be always shunting the shuttle of life into a frolic, and I think he ought to be excused if, now and then, he prefers a rational conversation with a sensible man. The fact is, I was just composing my obituary and talking it over with myself, that I might form some idea how it would read when put into print."

"It is thoughtful of you to point out your virtues before leaving us, for I suspect they are much after the fashion of the modern sermon, where nobody can possibly surmise the text without being told. So repeat, that I may know to what perfections you aspire before you go hence."

"You insinuate unbelief, and that will prevent me from accepting you as father confessor. But, badinage aside, I want a business chat with you. I have heard you say you would like to domicile here and own the contents of these rooms. Everything is for sale, except what belongs to my profession. What say you and how much?"

"What's up now, Jack?"

"The trouble with me, Sid, is that everything is down. In a word, I have reached the end of my money tether and I must go to work."

There was a look of surprise on Sid's face as he bantered: "Oh, crawl off! I don't believe a word you are saying."

"All the same, it is true. In the first place, I never had the money for which I have had credit. In the second place, I am now thirty-three years old, and for twelve years, as you know, I have been

throwing my capital right and left, until now I am very near the bottom of the box."

"I can't realize it! Your embarrassment can only be temporary. Tell me how much you want and hand me your check book."

"Come, Sid, none of that! The man who will accept a loan without knowing how he can repay it is no better than a thief. No honest man will permit it. However, my things here are for sale, my library and professional belongings excepted. I have an affection for these things and would much prefer to leave them in the possession of a friend. Do you want them, and how much?"

Sid took the check book, wrote out and handed a check to Jack. He took it, read it, and, tearing it in pieces, he said:

"Sid, you have overdone the thing. Twenty thousand dollars is just twice too much. All I want is a *quid pro quo,* and ten thousand dollars is about right."

"Oh, well, well, keep the check—keep it. These things must have cost you about that figure."

"They have cost me that sum, but they are not worth it. Sid, we were boys together and you were my college mate and chum, and I would as soon be your beneficiary as that of any living man. But, let me tell you, no man with brawn and brain can become the beneficiary of another and maintain his self-respect. It undermines character and weakens manhood."

"There, there, don't moralize! You always did have a streak of philosophy in you that would

crop out at the most unreasonable moments, and you always would have your own way. Here's your check. Now, tell me what you are going to do?"

"We will canvass the question. What do you say to pugilism? I stand six feet and one inch in my socks and weigh two hundred pounds, without an ounce of surplus flesh. I know that I am skilful with the gloves; that my foot work is more than good, and I can strike a blow that an athlete might envy."

"Pshaw! Let up with your chaff—I'm not swallowing it. I know that you are all that you say, and I will never forget your bout at Oxford, when we were wandering through England and impressing the people with our careless care for money. It was a beautiful night, with the moon at the full. As we strolled along the streets we came upon a mob—gownsmen and town in a riot. We fell in with the gownsmen, and at it we went. The acknowledged second best man in the kingdom was there in training for a fight. It was your fortune to find him in the *melee,* and I will never forget in how short a time you put him to sleep. You were the hero of the night, and for once I envied you."

"Well, if you don't like that line, what do you say to a position in a church choir? You know I have a voice."

"Yes, your barytone is without a flaw—but it won't do. You could never sprout wings, and you would soon be in a flirtation with the soprano."

"It seems I can't please you. What would you suggest?"

"Why not try your profession? The knights of the knife say you are among the finest of surgeons."

"Did you ever hear the joke on Walter Hudson? No? Well, I will tell it to you. Hudson was one day talking to a friend and made a rough remark about Jim Bingham, which Jim, in passing, overheard. On the first opportunity he called Hudson to account. Hudson wanted to know what he had said, and when and where. Jim told him. Hudson denied saying it. 'But you did,' said Jim. 'You are mistaken,' said Hudson. 'But you did, for I heard you.' Hudson looked him over coolly and said, 'Jim, surely you are not one of those fools who believe everything they hear. I always gave you credit for better sense.' "

"Just like Hudson," said Sid, laughing. "He is a cool chap. The temperature of devildom will be lowered when Hudson gets there. But how did the matter end?"

"I don't know. I left just about that time. But who can resist Hudson? And I never heard that any blood was shed?"

"But what of my suggestion—the practice of surgery?"

"If I can succeed in anything, I ought to succeed with the knife; for, after taking my degree here, I spent one year in London and three years in Paris studying surgery, as you know, for you were with me a good part of the time. I must admit that I

did not devote my whole time to it. In fact, I picked up a knowledge of a good many things not essential to the structure of the human body—such as roulette, skill at cards, and other like accomplishments. Still, I think I know something of the anatomy of man and how to handle the scalpel. I will meditate on your suggestion."

"Which means, Jack, that you have already considered it and made choice. You will practice here; your many friends will stand by you, and you will do a rushing practice."

Jack, with a smile on his face, looked intently at him for a minute, and said:

"Sid, do you really mean it? I thought you a better judge of human nature."

"I don't claim to be an adept, but what do you mean?"

"I mean, if I undertake the practice of surgery, I propose to do the cutting, and I do not propose to be cut."

"Your friends will not desert you, Jack."

"You are right, *my friends* will not desert me, but the great majority of *my associates* will—between the two there is a vast difference."

"I don't believe you, Jack."

"Your want of belief speaks well for you heart at the expense of your head. You have eyes, but you see not. It would make no change in you and a few more that I might name. You have something that you value more than you do your money. You have an ancestry of which you are justly proud, and you can trace your lineage back

until it is lost in the mists lying along the horizon. I believe in blood. It is just as necessary to true manhood as it is to the swift racer."

"Admit all that you say, what has it to do with the question?"

"A great deal. Somebody has said that society is made up of the bores and the bored. True enough, and nine-tenths of it belong to the Jonah's-gourd-vine order. It was not there yesterday, but it is there today; like the fly in the amber, we wonder how the devil it got there. This Jonah's-gourd-vine society has its growth in lucre, and it comes and goes with black Fridays. This growth of a night is without real culture; without that gentle refinement which comes with the blood of many years. It is without ancestral pride, and it hopes with the thin veneering of a stylish toilet, a villa at Newport, a yacht and a trip abroad, to rid itself of the smell of the stable, the odor of the butcher's shop, or the scent of the exchange. Its only pedestal is money, and if you haven't got money, you are a nobody. As a rule, it is the women of this set that go to build up the waste places of the European nobility and gentry, and they are weak enough to think that they ennoble themselves by selling themselves."

"Hold on, Jack, old fellow, hold on. You know there are some charming people in that set."

"I was speaking of the set as a whole."

"Jack, what has all this to do with your practice of surgery?"

"It has this to do with it. As soon as these plutocrats find out that my money is gone, they will barely tolerate me. Now, I don't propose to be tolerated. I don't belong to the 'you come, too,' class. I must receive the invitation as an equal or I'll none of it."

"Well, what do you intend to do?"

"I intend to clear out from here in search of other fields. I intend to reform and begin life anew.'

"Well, reform here and begin the new life."

"It simply can't be done. I thought your academical education would enable you to understand the meaning of the word *re-forme*. Re-forma—putting off the old and putting on the new. There must be a radical change. It is only the fool that thinks he can float on in the same old life-boat and yet change the current of his life. It is impossible to reform and continue in the old grooves, hold to the same associates and live amid the same scenes, and you know it, Sid. To begin the new life, you must cut loose from the old root and branch."

CHAPTER II

Some three months after Jack had the conversation with Livingstone he was *en route* for the city of Denver. He was sitting in the rear coach, worn and weary with the journey, and almost asleep, when the train slowed up and stopped at a town about a hundred miles away from the city. Having spent an hour or more in an effort to get something for which the seat was never intended,—comfort in a reclining position,—Jack sat up, and in a minute after saw a lady enter the coach. She was dressed in a traveling suit of rich material, but plainly made. An air of refinement hung around her, and her easy and unassuming carriage was such as springs only from culture and good breeding. She was rather above the medium height, and gracefully fashioned. All this Jack noticed as she advanced along the aisle of the coach and took the seat immediately in front of him. She settled herself, threw back her veil, opened her satchel and took out a book. On the throwing back of the veil Jack became interested. He had never seen more delicately chiseled features or a face of more patrician mould.

The train was a few minutes behind time, and soon after leaving the station the engineer pulled

the throttle open and made for the time table. On the seat in front of the lady sat a portly man. A countryman evidently, because he kept the window hoisted and did not pull down the blind. There was a suspicion of chill in the air, the weather was dry, and great clouds of dust gathered with the rushing train. The lady was disturbed, and nestled as close to the side of the car as she could for protection. The man, of course, had his face to the window, apparently looking upon the shifting scenery with an ox-eyed intelligence. Jack went to the fellow and, touching him, said:

"Please let your window down."

"I'd ruther not," was the reply.

"Shall I help you? They stick sometimes and are hard to lower."

"I don't want it down."

When Jack made up his mind that a thing had to be done there was always a masterfulness about him hard to resist, and now there was a glint in his steel-gray eyes that was boring its way into those of the man as he said:

"Yes, you will, my good fellow. Don't you see the dust coming into the coach and making the ladies very uncomfortable?"

As he was talking he took hold of the window and lowered it, saying:

"There, I knew you would as soon as you were informed the dust was annoying the ladies. Thank you."

The lady had watched and had heard all that

had been said and done, and there was just the glimpse of a smile about her perfect mouth as she inclined her head to Jack slightly in acknowledgment of his kindness.

For some time the train thundered on with tremendous speed, when there came the wild scream of the whistle, followed by jerking and jolting, and coach after coach went down an embankment. Jack gripped his seat underneath and held with giant strength. The seat tore away, but Jack's fall was broken, while the momentum shot the other passengers from one end of the coach to the other.

It was a fearful wreck, and soon were heard the cries and groans of the wounded and dying. Jack was badly shaken up, but managed to escape from the wreck without any personal injury. He found the train hands gathering, and, taking charge, directed them to go to the nearest office and telegraph to headquarters at Denver. In the course of an hour the slightly injured passengers were all relieved and the seriously injured were placed in a near-by farm-house and in surrounding houses.

When the lady of whom we have spoken was passed out from the wreck she was found to be unconscious. When Jack saw her he hesitated for a moment, then, taking her in his arms, he carried her to the farm-house and requested the woman that met him to make her as comfortable as possible until his return. He went to the through baggage-car, succeeded in finding the trunk he wanted, had it carried to the house and opened it.

It was filled with medical and surgical cases. Finding his patient still unconscious, he went to work with restoratives, the woman assisting him. After a time there was a quiver of the eyelids, then they opened to find Jack gazing anxiously into them. They closed and Jack left the room, after giving some instructions to his assistant.

After Jack had left the room the unknown lady lay still for some time, and then asked:

"How did I come to this place?"

"Why, honey, you didn't come. You was brought here."

"I know. But how was I brought?"

"The gentleman what went away a little while ago brought you, and told me to take care of you and make you comfortable as I could. Then me and Mandy—that's my gal—undressed you and put Mandy's best night-gown on you."

"But, my good woman, how did he bring me?"

"Honey, he just picked you up in his arms, like you was a little baby, and brought you here. He seems powerful strong, and when he laid you down on the bed you looked so pale and white I thought you was killed. He said no, you would come to, but you was bad hurt, and he looked mighty bothered and pestered."

"Who is he? Do you know that man?"

"La, child, how'd I know him? I'se never laid eyes on him 'fore to-day. I thought he must be a friend o' yourn. When he laid you down on the bed he went away and had his trunk brought here

and got out some medicines and begun to work on you. His trunk is in the passage now."

"Please look at the trunk and tell me if it has a name on it."

"I's done seen the trunk. It's mighty big and fine, and it's marked Dr. Jack Hamilton, New York City."

She lay still for a few minutes with closed eyes, and then said:

"Ah! Dr. Jack Hamilton! Where did he go?"

"I guess he went to help 'bout the other folks that's hurt. I sees him coming to'ard the house now."

In a few minutes Jack entered the door, saying: "Well, Mrs. Jones, I hear that is your name, how is our patient getting on?"

"I think she's doing right smart. She's just been talking—"

Here the patient interposed, fearing that Mrs. Jones might tell more than she was willing for Hamilton to hear.

"Yes, I am doing as well as I could expect, but I am in a good deal of pain."

Turning to her, he said: "Will you be so kind as to locate the pain?"

"It is in my left arm."

"Do you feel no pain elsewhere?"

"None; I feel sore and bruised generally, but I have no pain except in that arm."

"Thank you. The small bone of your left arm below the elbow is broken. I detected that

when—when I was trying to revive you from the shock which you had received."

After what Mrs. Jones had told her, she knew very well when Jack had detected the broken arm, and her face flushed as she thought of it. But she only said:

"I wish someone would telegraph my father."

"Certainly," said Jack. "Where does your father live?"

"In Denver."

"We have already telegraphed to headquarters in Denver. But give me your father's address and I will see that a telegram reaches him. What street and number?'

"Thank you. The telegram sent will be quite sufficient."

She lay still for some time, and then said: "My arm seems to pain me more and more. Can you give me any relief?"

'Yes, I can give you present relief, but that will not amount to any real good. Your arm needs attention, and the sooner the better."

"I know it does, and I suppose the train will soon be here from Denver with surgeons and physicians."

Jack looked at her intently, saying: "We are here under peculiar circumstances. Suppose we act like sensible people and exchange names. Of course the acquaintance need not continue beyond today. I am Dr. Jack Hamilton."

"You may call me Kate," she replied after a moment's hesitation.

"Miss Kate, it is my duty to tell you that your arm ought to have immediate attention. You ought not to wait for the Denver train. The longer you wait, the sorer and more swollen will the muscles become and the greater the pain in setting the bone. I have no doubt the Denver train will bring skilled surgeons, but it will be four hours before that train can reach here, and you ought to have immediate relief. If you will trust me, I know I am fully competent to take charge of your case, with Mrs. Jones to assist me."

"You are a doctor, then?"

'I believe I said as much when I gave you my name, and my offer indicates that I so consider myself. Perhaps I ought to say that I aspire to be a specialist—a surgeon."

"The pain is very great, and I will trust you."

He gave instruction to Mrs. Jones how to prepare the patient, and went out to his trunk. After searching for a time, he secured everything that he wanted. Returning, he found her ready, and the most perfect arm he had ever seen, bared to the shoulder.

"Miss Kate, you may suffer for a little while. Would you like to try chloroform?"

"No, I can stand it."

Without further remark he went to work. She was surprised at the softness and gentleness of his touch, and felt instinctively that she was in skilful hands. Stopping only now and then to give directions to Mrs. Jones, he worked rapidly, but

tenderly, until the last bandage was in place. Drawing back, he asked:

"Did you suffer much?"

"Yes, it was very painful."

"You did not even move the whole time."

"No, I was trying to help you all I could."

A look of satisfaction was on Jack's face as he said:

"Well, I want you to rest while I go around and see how the others are getting on."

He had gone some time, when he came into the room with the question, "How are you feeling now?"

"I have no special pain now, and but for the general shaking up I feel as well as I ever did."

"Well, with Mrs. Jones' help you can get up and dress and be ready for the train when it comes. In the meantime, I will prepare a sling for your arm. When you are ready, Mrs. Jones can call me and I will come in and adjust it. The break requires that the forearm should rest at a right angle to the elbow."

Mrs. Jones called, and he came in with a white silk handkerchief in his hand. His patient was dressed, with the sleeve of the left arm slit from the wrist-band to the elbow. The handkerchief was converted into a sling and adjusted with the help of Mrs. Jones.

"If I can be of any further service, you can command me," said Jack.

There was nothing more to do, so Jack dragged a chair into the front yard and took a seat in the

shade of a tree. He lit a cigar and prepared to meditate and wait for the incoming train.

Blessed be the man that invented the cigar! He was a benefactor—a philanthropist without knowing it! It is an inspiration to the student, rest to the weary, and a solace to the sorrowing! Who would miss the dreamy visions that we see and the beautiful castles that we build in the curl and the ring of its smoke!

Jack was communing with himself and blowing rings, in each of which he saw the framed face of his late patient. "Her form is perfect, and all of nature's padding," he said with a smile. "There is no fraud about it. Her hair is nut-brown, wavy and silky. Evidently there is no proletarian blood there—she is all patrician. I wonder who she is and where she lives? But what is she to me? A dream, merely a dream—only that, and nothing more."

But all the same, he continued to dream until he was roused from his reverie by the scream of the incoming train. Several men got off when it stopped, two of whom, after talking with some of the hands, started directly to the farm-house. One of them was rather below the medium height, somewhat dumpy in his make-up, and moved with a short, quick, jerky step. The other was tall, of a well-proportioned and commanding figure, and advanced with a strong and resolute stride. Jack observed that silver threads were on the head of each, as they passed without looking at him. Mrs. Jones met them at the door and ushered them into

the room. The lady stood up as the tall gentleman entered, and was clasped to his heart as he exclaimed in a broken voice:

"My child, my child, my precious child! God only knows how agonized I was when I heard of the wreck, knowing that you were on the train."

While he was speaking she had twined her sound arm around his neck and, pulling him down, she had kissed him again and again, sobbing and saying:

"I knew you would come! I knew you would come! Oh, father, it was dreadful, so dreadful!"

Here the dumpy man broke in: "Come, Dick, turn that bundle of trouble loose and let me get at it. It seems to have got damaged in the mix-up. For a half-hour before starting its Dad's face looked like a country grave-yard, and I had some hope of holding a *post mortem,* but just as we were leaving an unfortunate telegram came, directed to all the world, and I have been disconsolate ever since. Come here, let me into that sling—I must see why you are slinging that arm."

With a face wreathed with happy smiles she went to him, saying:

"My dear old Uncle Gus, you can never know how glad I am to see you, but gladder still that you are forced to postpone your *post mortem.*"

"Dr. Gustavus Blake, if you don't attend to your duties and stop worrying that child, I will have a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* issued and put you where your fatuity will receive all necessary

attention, and your too-confiding patients be in safety. Get to work, sir."

"Judge Richard Somers, you are a fraud! I have known you ever since we spent six years at Harvard together, and you have never had me fooled for a minute. You are nothing but an old relic of Coke, and when you were about burnt out at your profession you managed to hoodwink the idiots, commonly called voters, into putting you on the Supreme Bench." While he was talking he had taken the arm from the sling and, on seeing that it was bandaged, exclaimed:

"Good God, child, have you fallen into the hands of some country practitioner, who hardly knows how to shape a pill? This is a matter too serious and important for experiment," and his face wore an anxious expression.

"My dear old friend, I think you are mistaken. Any port in a storm, you know. I was suffering horribly—much more than I made known. The man had dragged me out of the wreck, and when I was brought to this house he came with me. He examined my arm and told me it was broken below the elbow. He said the sooner it had attention the better, and assured me that his skill was sufficient to meet the requirements of my injury, and I think you will find everything properly and skilfully done."

"Much you know about it," muttered the doctor, loud enough to be heard. "I'll be bound if he was young and had a handsome face it had all your attention."

After examining everything for some time with great care and anxiety, he said: "By the shade of Aesculapius, the fellow knew what he was doing. He is no country pill-maker. Every appliance is perfect and of the up-to-date kind, and all beautifully placed. Where could he have gotten these things—not about here, that's certain, for they are of modern make and used only by the few who keep pace with the profession. You bundle of luck! You seem to have fallen into safe hands, and we will not disturb your tramp doctor's work until we get you home. But tell us about the accident."

In the meantime Jack had sauntered into the house, overheard a part of the conversation, and concluded that he had better vacate. He went out and gave orders for his trunk to be removed and put on the train for Denver.

When Kate had finished telling all she knew, her father said:

"Where is this man? I want to thank him for his kindness to you."

"The last I saw of him he was in the front yard, sitting in the shade of a tree, smoking a cigar and blowing rings."

"But he is not there now, for I can see all over the yard. What did you say his name is?

"What is it, Mrs. Jones? You saw the name on his trunk in the hallway."

"I will go and see." Returning, he said: "The trunk is not there. Tell me, Mrs. Jones, if you can recall it."

"My mem'ry's not as good as it used to be, and I's just been trying to think. Seems to me 'twas Henton—Dr. Henton. He's some 'ristocrat, I can tell you that, 'cause when he rolled his sleeves up to work on Miss Kate's arm I seed he wore silk next his skin, and he has a way of looking at you when he wants somethin' done that just makes you jump and do it quick."

"Mrs. Jones, can you tell us anything else that was on the trunk?"

"Seems to me I saw Dr. Henton, New Ark City, but I don't know where that is, and—"

"Let the fellow go," broke in the doctor. "I wish him well, however, for the sake of the job he left behind him. He was a Samaritan in time of need."

"Yes, he seemed a right smart man and mighty handy," said Mrs. Jones.

The judge put his hand to his mouth as if to hide a yawn, the doctor looked at Kate with eyes twinkling with fun, and she said to herself, "Thank you, Mrs. Jones."

In the course of an hour the wounded had been cared for, and it was announced that in twenty minutes the train would leave on its return to Denver. Kate and her companions entered the rear coach. Jack saw this and was careful to stow himself away forward in the smoker. The train had nearly reached the city, when Kate remarked:

"Father, didn't you, or Uncle Gus, say something about getting a telegram as you were leaving for the wreck, that relieved your anxiety?"

"Yes, it was from you, but without direction. Your messenger must have forgotten my name—did not care to let you know it—and sent it to the office of the company. Fortunately, the man who sent the message yesterday from me, saying I would expect you home to-day, received it. He surmised it was from you and sent it to me. Here is the telegram."

Kate took it and read:

"My arm is injured, but not seriously. Kate."

There was a smile on her face as she read. She gave it back without comment, thinking as she did so:

"I acted foolishly. I ought to have given him my full name. He did the best he could, and, to say, the least, it was kind."

The shades of night were gathering as the train rolled up to the station.

CHAPTER III

Kate Somers was a graduate of Vassar of two years standing. Without striving for position, she had done full justice to her several duties. While there she made a few warm friends and was generally respected. She could not be called popular, because her gentle dignity and quiet reserve did not contribute to intimacy. Among the friends that she had made there was not one that she prized so highly as she did Grace Russell of New York City, with whom she still continued to exchange letters and confidences. During her vacations she had seen many places of historical and social interest in the United States and in Canada; and after her graduation, in company with friends, she traveled in Europe for twelve months or more, visiting the scenes and wonders of the old continent. Returning home, she had been welcomed into society, and at once took her place among the leaders.

Judge Somers was a son of the old Bay State and of Puritan blood. He was learned and literary, and his affable and courteous manners secured him a welcome among the most cultured. After taking his degree, he married and went to Denver while that city was still in short dresses.

Entering upon the practice of his profession with marked energy and ability, he soon gained a lucrative practice, and by judicious investments he had become a wealthy man. Kate was his only child. His wife died when Kate was ten years old, but he had never married again, and seemed wholly absorbed in his daughter and in his judicial duties. At fifty he was in the vigor of his manhood; walked with a quick, springy step, and continued on the bench only because his nature was such that he could not be idle.

Dr. Blake was a jolly old bachelor of comfortable fortune. He seemed a verification of the saying, laugh and grow fat. Gus and Dick, as they loved to call each other, were boys of the same neighborhood, entered the University at the same time, and were room-mates throughout their six-year course. After taking his degree of M. D. and serving three years in a New York hospital, he established himself in Boston and, as he said, "hung out his shingle with the pious intention of feeding on the ills of humanity." He gradually worked himself forward in his profession and became distinguished for his skill in surgery. "Dick" had written to him several times, begging him to come to Denver. But "Gus" could never get his own consent until he heard that the wife of his old friend was dead. So we find him in Denver with an experience of about fourteen years in that city; its leading physician and in charge of the city hospital. It is said that "Dick" and "Gus," so far as is known, never had but one seeming alterca-

tion, and this occurred about two weeks after the doctor arrived in the city. He was staying with his old friend and they were sitting on the veranda, when Judge Somers remarked:

"By the way, Gus, have you thought of an office? I think I know just the place."

"No, not yet, but it is about time, and I will look at your place to-morrow. I must also find a place where I can eat and sleep, and in this matter I can assure you I am a little particular."

"You are, eh? What's the matter with this house?"

"Nothing that I know of. It is a beautiful building and of delightful location."

"Pshaw! You know what I mean. Why not make your home with me and Kate?"

"I would like to do so on certain conditions."

"Name your conditions."

"Well, I must have a room apart, where I can't hear Kate strumming on the piano and where I will not disturb the house with my high jinks in day time and my melodious snoring in the night time."

"All right. What else must you have?"

"I must have my own factotum and he must live here."

"No objection. Go on with your list."

"I must have a place for my horses,—I intend to keep two,—and a place for my vehicles."

"I am still agreeable. Go on."

"For these privileges and such table comforts as you may furnish, you must accept full compensation."

The face of Judge Somers flushed as he answered:

"Gus Blake, do you think I could be prevailed upon to accept pay for the little that you would eat? Impossible! You know that I will consider it a personal kindness on your part to make your home here. So say no more about it!"

"Look here, Dick, it's no use getting red in the face. The weather is too warm to take on additional heat. The matter between us is one purely of business and sentiment has nothing to do with it. Whenever a man permits his sympathy or sentiment to mingle in his business, he ceases to be a business man; and if ever I find myself in partnership with such a man, I will forthwith force a dissolution. I know you are a man of large means and the expense to you would be a mere bagatelle—you would never know it, much less feel it. But there is another view to take of the matter. Under your view, I would be here on sufferance, as the lawyers say. That might suit some people—but you must excuse me. I'll none of it. If I stay here, I must have the right to stay and I must feel that I have that right. If I want to quarrel with you now and then, I must have the right to do it, for you are fearfully afflicted with obstinacy and pig-headedness. I must have the right to kick a servant occasionally, because it always puts me in a good humor and strengthens my better nature. If the tommy cat gets to courting his sweetheart at midnight with discordant notes, I must have the right to lift my window and throw

the bootjack at him, or go out into the back yard and chase him and blaspheme a little. You have no idea what a relief it is—a joy which you—"

"Oh, stop your chattering and nonsense. You are as voluble as a lawyer who has taken fees from both sides, and—"

"Well, you may know something about that; I do not. I do know it is not the part of true friendship to undermine your friend's manhood, deprive him of his independence and make of him a dependent, a coat-tail swinger, a hanger-on, a mere 'me too' fellow."

The discussion continued for some time with more or less warmth, when Judge Somers said:

"Gus, you are displaying more asinine qualities than I thought it possible even for you to show."

"Come, my friend, spread your flattery gently; don't throw it at me in chunks. Your bump of egotism needs trephining. Do you know it might be difficult to tell the asinine from the angelic?"

"I think it natural for you to confound the two."

"A better man than I claim to be did the same thing."

"I don't believe it."

"I can prove it. It is a biblical fact, and I hope you believe the Bible."

"Some people have questioned your soundness."

"If you haven't read it, you may have heard that Balaam, on a certain occasion, paid a visit to his friend, Balak, and that his means of transportation was the back of an ass. If you remember what was told you, you know that Balaam met with an ad-

venture on the way with an angel standing in the road. Balaam could not see the angel, but the ass did, and refused to go forward. Balaam thought the refusal merely a display of asinine qualities and undertook to force the beast forward. The angel then spoke to Balaam through the mouth of the ass. That the ass should talk seems to have been no surprise to Balaam—no doubt he thought it another way of displaying asinine qualities. After a time Balaam saw the angel, and, finding that he had confused the angel with the ass, he excused the beast. To my way of thinking, Balaam was the chief ass of the occasion."

During this exegesis, Kate had come in from the street and took her position by her father. When the doctor had finished his diatribe, Judge Somers rose up, saying:

"You are incorrigible, Gus, and if you fancy you must buy imaginary rights, arrange the price with Kate, for I shall have nothing to do with it. Kate is a little spendthrift and is always in want of money to buy gloves, handkerchiefs, ribbons and bonbons."

"Dick, I always said you were a sensible fellow, and now I know you are no less discreet. Thank you. I see the olive branch and I shall respect your flag of truce. In fact, I think you see the angel."

Then and there, with the most business-like air, the doctor made his arrangements with Kate, which consisted merely in telling her what he would do and what she must do. The doctor did

all the talking, while Kate, immensely tickled, listened with nods of approval.

When the train reached the city and came to a stop, Jack saw Kate and her companions leave the coach and, entering a handsome equipage, drive away. Arriving at home, Kate went to her room, and, putting herself in the hands of her maid, she was soon comfortable in a negligee gown and reclining chair. It was a little chilly, so the maid was ordered to kindle a fire, and was then told she might go. Leaning back in her chair, Kate closed her eyes and seemed lost in a sea of rest for a half hour or more, when she rang a bell and the maid appeared. She was directed to bring the letters from a certain drawer in the writing-desk. Kate quickly looked them over, and, finding the one she wanted, she opened it. It was from Grace Russell. Glancing over it, Kate came to the following paragraph:

"Katie dear, you know I wrote you about meeting Dr. Jack Hamilton. I have met him several times since, and I find him the cream of society. He is ranked among the leaders of his profession, but just why nobody knows, as he scarcely makes a pretense of practicing, and he is supposed to be rich. He has been a great reader and traveler, and he seems to know everything. Yesterday some of us spent the day on the water—yachting—and I was under his wing. I think him—my Jack, as I call him—simply delightful. Sometimes he may appear a little reserved in his manners, but he knows just when to throw all that aside and enter into the fun, and then, Katie, he is really charming;

and with his easy, graceful ways, he just slips into the heart before you know it. And yet I am not sure I am not afraid of him—just the least little bit—when, with his great gray eyes, he looks into mine, as if he were reading something in the back of my head. I wonder if he is a mind reader? Au revoir, Grace."

"P. S.—Now, Katie, after writing all this nonsense, you must not think for a moment that Cupid has made his home in my heart, for my Jack hasn't said a word. I am only watching the Little Love God at his archery as he lets his arrows fly. He may be shooting at me, but he hasn't hit me yet. By-by, Grace."

With a smile Kate folded the letter, saying to herself as she did so: "So I knew you, Dr. Jack Hamilton—thanks to Grace's letters. I could not give you my full name, fearing that you had heard of me through Grace. But there is one thing, Dr. Jack, I am not inclined to forgive—that you should think me such a fool as to accept your word for your skill with broken limbs. No doubt it was flattering to your vanity, of which you have a good supply; but, Jack, you should remember that it was at the expense of my common sense. But my dear old Uncle Gus says you did your work beautifully, and I know you gave me great relief—so I must forgive you. There is one thing, however, I will not forgive. It was quite unnecessary for you to gather me up in your arms."

Rousing from her revery, she said to her maid: "Mag, help me to bed," and she was not seen by the public for four weeks.

CHAPTER IV

For a month Jack remained at his hotel, apparently without business and seemingly without purpose. He devoted himself to a study of the city and its possible future. He found it beautiful for situation, built as it is upon several plateaus rising with gentle ascent from the river and facing the hills, only a few miles away, that roll like billows to the foot of the mountains. The scene was grand and the view impressive, and the pure air stirred his blood and quickened his energy. In going to and fro he halted many a time to gaze upon the panorama and drink in the grandeur of his surroundings. He was surprised at the magnitude of the city, at the solidity of its structures, at the size of its public buildings, and at their architectural beauty and finish. Its commercial importance, the immense traffic of the railroads, its local advantages, the enterprise of its citizens and its marvelous growth convinced him that it was only in the springtime of its career. In his wanderings he had so familiarized himself with the place that a stranger would have taken him for an old habitant.

He had brought with him letters of introduction to a few prominent people; but during this time he

had not presented one of them, preferring to reach a decision as to his future from data derived from his own researches. He had formed only a few speaking acquaintances, and these seemed to like him, as he did the listening and permitted them to do the talking. Only one of them tried to break through the reserve with which Jack surrounded himself. Mr. Allbright was a fit representative of a class of men with which we have all met—more or less. He was a good-natured, self-satisfied fellow whose mental pabulum was chiefly gossip, and who was possessed of more curiosity than brains, and of more perseverance than prudence. He had attempted several times to find out what Jack was doing in Denver. He was again skirmishing on the investigating line, when Jack said:

"Let me tell you an anecdote I once heard. There was a man in the State of New York, where I grew up, that had grown rich from small beginnings. An acquaintance, with more curiosity than tact, wanted to know of him how he had made his fortune, and was told: 'You see, it was kinder this way. I had to work, and I worked hard, 'tending to my own business all the time, and in this way I made 'bout fifty thousand dollars. After this, I kept on working and I made about fifty thousand dollars by letting other people's business alone. So you see that it was by working on these two lines that I made my fortune.' "

Allbright looked a little dazed as he replied, "It seems to me it all amounts to about the same thing."

"Well, it does look a little that way," said Jack.

The conversation lagged and Allbright took himself off. Meeting with two of his associates, he told them Hamilton's joke. They were very much amused, and Allbright said: "D—d if I don't half-way believe the fellow was poking fun at me, and I think I'll go back and give him a piece of my mind."

"No, you had better not do that," said one. "In the first place, I don't think he needs it. In the second place, it is an article that very few of us can afford to spare."

"But what if he meant to insult me?"

"He didn't mean that. Evidently you were asking too many questions and he told you this joke to let you know, in a polite way, that he did not care to be interviewed. That's about all there is of it. Come, it's my set up," and they went.

Among the letters of introduction that Jack brought with him was one to Dr. Blake from Dr. Fitzgerald, who had served three years with Dr. Blake in the hospital. He called at the doctor's office, presented his card, and was ushered into the reception room. In about ten minutes Dr. Blake came in with the card in his hand, saying in a conversational way, "Dr. Hamilton, I believe."

As he came in Jack rose up and said, "Dr. Blake, allow me to present this letter."

Dr. Blake took the letter, waved him to a seat, sat down himself and began to read. Hamilton remembered him and understood the reason of his presence at the railroad wreck. He determined in-

stantly not to refer to that accident. Jack made a study of the doctor as he read the letter, and decided that he was a man of brain, of quick perception, possessor of a strong will and much good humor. When Dr. Blake came to the signature to the letter, he sprang up and, seizing Jack's hand, he shook it vigorously and said:

"Dr. Hamilton, I am more than glad to see you. I am delighted, for your presence with this letter makes me feel young again. Dear old Fitz says many good things about you. He tells me your specialty is surgery and that you think of locating in this city. Just the place for you, and you are needed here. But tell me about Fitz—the dear old boy. The last time I saw him was in Boston, just before I left for the West. I remember he told me he had managed to accumulate a household, that is, a wife and several children, but I don't remember that he spoke of having accumulated anything else, unless it was debt, which naturally follows the household business. By the way, are you married?"

"Speaking from your standpoint, it gives me pleasure to say that I have not been so unfortunate as to accumulate a household."

"Well, well, don't be too sure about the standpoint; but go on and tell me about my old friend Fitz."

For some time they talked of Dr. Fitzgerald, when Hamilton closed the conversation with the remark that Dr. Fitzgerald had accumulated not only a most interesting household, but also a most

interesting fortune, and that he ranked very high as a specialist in the treatment of the eye, ear and nose.

"He deserves it all and more too," said Dr. Blake, "for he is the prince of good fellows. It makes me feel young again to talk of him, and I am rollicking around with him in the old hospital days, when I was trying to get rid of my ignorance, but which clings to me like the shirt of Nessus."

After some further conversation, Hamilton was in the act of leaving, when Dr. Blake said:

"So you have decided to cast your lot among us?"

"And I am now in search of a suitable office."

"See Van Tromp, near the city hospital. He has the suite of rooms you want. A little costly, but all the more desirable. Secure these rooms and fling your shingle to the breeze. Put on a bold front and a wise look, and never forget that the crowd seldom looks beyond the surface and, as a rule, accepts a man at his own valuation. I shall back you in the beginning for Fitz's sake, and I hope, as time passes, that I shall only grow more earnest for your sake."

"I shall act on your advice and profit from your experience."

"I don't know about that. Evidently, you are no spring chicken."

CHAPTER V

Several months have come and gone, and spring is beginning to unfold herself in beauty. Jack has secured the Van Tromp rooms and furnished them with pleasing taste. They consist of five rooms—a reception-room, a private office, two bedrooms, and a bath-room in which are to be seen a punching-bag, boxing-gloves, dumb-bells and other *indicia* of the manly art. He has a good driving horse and has purchased a magnificent saddler of pure Kentucky blood and of unusual speed. He has assisted Dr. Blake in performing several delicate operations, and he has made of him a fast friend and a fond companion.

He has made many pleasant acquaintances among the best people in the city, but avoids fashionable society, with its balls and entertainments. He has no time for club life and he never attends the opera or the theater except upon important nights. Business has begun to flow in upon him. His industry and skill have impressed themselves upon public attention and he is regarded as the coming man in his profession. He rides like a Centaur, and in the afternoons, when not otherwise engaged, he mounts his mettled saddler and, passing beyond the city limits, he breaks into a rapid

canter, pushing sometimes almost to the racing speed, to the joy of the steed and the health of the rider.

During this time he has thought often of the train wreck and his lady patient. In his drives and rides, and in his walks along the streets, he has had hopes of meeting her; but he has now come to the conclusion that he must have been mistaken in supposing her to be of the city. She must have been a bird of passage, and the thought brought to him a feeling akin to that of disappointment.

It was evening. Judge Somers had finished his official duties for the term, and was sitting with Dr. Blake on the veranda, when the latter said, "By the way, Dick, have you met Dr. Hamilton?"

"No, and if he is to get the grip on me that he seems to have on you, I don't know that I ought to meet him, for he must be a hypnotist."

"You can add another to the list of your faulty opinions, which are many—no doubt. He is not a hypnotist, nor is there any humbuggery or mystery about him. He is simply a cultured and traveled gentleman, who knows how to entertain when he is with a man that he thinks can appreciate him. He is not a promiscuous talker, and I don't know that he will have any desire to put either his mental or social grip on you."

"Evidently, Gus, he has captured you, for you have been singing his praises for some time, and his skill and his perfections form the refrain of every song. I have no doubt he is pulling toward the front of his profession, and since you assure me

he is no hypnotist I have no objection to meeting him."

"Well, I don't think him exactly ready for the horses and chariot of fire; and as for pulling toward the front of his profession, he is doing no such thing. He is already there. About a month ago I saw him amputate a limb at the hip joint—a difficult operation—and his skill surprised me with all my experience. I tell you it was wonderful—"

"No doubt," broke in the judge, "and must rank among the wonder of wonders if it was one of the upper limbs. Is the fellow living?"

"About as wonderful as your wit is cheap. Yes, the fellow is not only living, but he is almost well. Only ten days ago I saw him operate for appendicitis, and I tell you he had the man open and the worm in his hand at almost a single stroke. He is not troubled with nerves, and his manipulation is perfect. He loves his work, and I never saw the man that could handle the knife as he does. You ought to see him at his work—"

"Excuse me, Gus, that is just what I don't want to see. I take great pleasure in humoring you in your whimsical old age, but you must excuse me this time."

"Ah, I forgot! Hanging is the only remedy that commands your elevated attention. Every one to his taste. *De gustibus non disputandum.*"

With a quizzical look the judge said: "Gus, tell me about the appendix and its uses. What office does it fill in the human economy? It seems to be a late discovery, and to operate for it has become almost a fashionable fad."

"I appreciate your question, Dick, but I decline to answer because it is one of folly. You remember, perhaps, what Solomon said about answering such questions. I shall invite Hamilton to take supper with us to-morrow night, and if you wish it we can discuss the question as an appetizer."

"You will do no such thing. The court of its own motion grants an injunction—except as to the invitation."

The next evening, as Hamilton mounted the steps, he was met by Dr. Blake and introduced to Judge Somers. For an instant he was surprised out of his usual calm, when he saw in the judge friend number two of Miss Kate at the railroad wreck. A dreamy feeling crept over him for a minute as he wondered if he was to meet her. By the time supper was announced he was himself again, and entered readily and brilliantly into conversation on general topics. He was on his mettle, and, feeling that he must make a favorable impression, he exchanged *bon mot* and repartee with the doctor so effectively that he had him, now and then, on the defensive, to the great delight of the judge, who was joining in the conversation just enough to keep it going. After a time, replying to a remark of the judge, he fired a witticism that sent Blake off into roars of laughter, who exclaimed:

"Blaze away, Hamilton, there is nobody here but us girls—just say what you please. Only you must not talk about the operation you performed a few days ago for appendicitis. Dick thinks it will not do for an appetizer, and he has issued an

injunction against it. But turn your shrapnel loose on everything else *ad libitum.*"

"I shall respect the injunction. The judge need have no fears, as I never talk shop. I am a physician and surgeon only when I am on duty or in my office. It has always been a source of wonderment to me how any man can, for a moment, imagine that the general public can be interested in his private doings, his individual plans and speculations, or enjoy the constant smell of his shop."

"The evil is founded in pure and unadulterated selfishness," said the judge. "Time and again have I been compelled to listen to certain legal vampires who spend their time in trying to suck information from others, instead of devoting themselves to mastering the principles that underlie the case in hand. They are generally third-rate fellows, without an original idea, who are all at sea unless they can find some reported case deciding the issues. They think only of themselves, and they are utterly regardless of your feelings or your wishes, of your comfort or your surroundings, but go on and on detailing and retailing their little cases *ad nauseam.*"

Winking at Hamilton, Dr. Blake exclaimed:

"My, how he must have suffered when the mere recollection so disturbs his judicial repose! Who would think the weighty, ponderous gravity of a judge could be moved! But, having suffered, I know how to sympathize with him in his affliction. Even in Beotia these fellows, about whom we have been talking, would grade as first-class asses.

In comparison a leper would be a delightful companion, and I always shun these worthies as I would the bubonic plague—all the way from the effeminate ninny who parts his hair in the middle down to the faded grandmother who is ever ready to recount the endless list of the charms and the beauties, the smart sayings and the smart doings of her grandchildren, and who would stop a funeral procession rather than lose an opportunity to tell you about them. By the way, what becomes of all the beautiful and smart children? Who can tell me?"

"I am with you, doctor, until you come to the grandmother," said Hamilton. "There I draw the line, and for her I am ready to break a lance. She must not be included among these princes of boredom. She has learned from experience the weakness of humanity; her sufferings have taught her how to enter into the sufferings of others; her sorrows have taught her how to sympathize; her tribulations have spiritualized her nature, and from the sunset of life she is looking back at its dawn and living again in her children's children. I love to hear her tell the stories of the long ago to the big-eyed little ones; I love to hear her prattle with the little ones as they play and romp around her, and I listen with reverence as she talks to me of her darlings that are ever nestling in her heart. God bless the grandmother! In the home where she lingers it is a benediction."

Dr. Blake was nodding his head approvingly, and the judge was watching the speaker intently as

he gave expression to his sentiments in a strong barytone voice. There was silence for a minute, broken by Dr. Blake with:

"Dick, start the wine! Hamilton's sentimentalities have made me as dry as a preacher's sermon. Start the wine!"

At a glance from the judge the servant began to fill the glasses. When he came to Hamilton he stopped, as Hamilton placed his hand over the glass and said:

"I beg to be excused. Having joined the ranks of the Reformers, I must stick to my credo."

"What do you mean by that?" said Dr. Blake.

"It means that, having spent a fortune in fast living, I have changed my mode of life and turned my back on the past."

"Do you think a glass of wine would hurt you? You are not a prohibitionist, are you?"

"I believe in total abstinence, and that, I suppose, places me among the prohibitionists. No honest man can believe in a creed for himself and not believe it would be best for others. Having, like the prodigal, come to my senses, I resolved to begin life anew. It is impossible to put on the new life and at the same time indulge in the old life. If we hold to the environments and continue the habits of the old life, there can be no reformation. Now, I never was drunk, nor do I think one glass of wine would do me any physical harm, but, having resolved to begin a new life, to take it would weaken my will power, lower my self-respect, and in this way it would injure me morally."

"'Tis good to be merry and wise,
'Tis good to be honest and true;
'Tis good to be off with the old love,
Before you are on with the new.'"

hummed the doctor, and said:

"That's the idea, is it, Hamilton? Well, I have made no resolves and I have registered no vows, so here's success to your resolution, and may you continue resolute in your resolution," and he drained his glass.

"There is no chance for prohibition in this State," said the judge. "In fact, the subject is not even under consideration; but there is an element that would be glad to see the State take charge of the whiskey business and establish places for its sale in our several cities, towns and counties. In this way the State would do all the buying and all the selling, under certain restrictions, and reap all the profits. The advocates of this plan call it the Dispensary system. Do you favor this view of the liquor question?"

"I have heard nothing of the element to which you refer, but when traveling in Europe I met with the proposed system and I do not approve it. You merely transfer the place of drinking. Instead of buying a drink, you buy a pint; you take it to your room, and my observation is that young men, by reason of association and good fellowship, are thus often induced to drink when otherwise they would not indulge. A drink might have satisfied the purchaser, but, having a pint on hand, he must finish the pint, and in this way the system tends to increase the evil. Of course, the man who wants to

drink will have it, and the system only suggests to him the necessity of always keeping a supply on hand. As I see it, the system furnishes a soil for the growth of temptation. I prefer prohibition."

"But the advocates of the system claim that it reduces drinking and drunkenness, and that it is a moral institution?"

"To claim is easy, but where is the proof? There is none, and the advocates furnish us with the assertion only. But the idea of its being a moral institution! Save me and mine from all such morals as flow from a drinking-saloon, whether managed by the State or by an individual! If whiskey drinking is an evil, then whiskey selling, for the purpose of drink, is an evil, and I am not able to see how the practice of an evil can contribute to moral growth. Moreover, the institution is founded on opposing principles. It is moral in that it restrains the evil; it is profitable in that it encourages the vice. It is a moral and financial enterprise, and the one can prosper only to the extent that the other is defeated. The profit feature makes it to the interest of the State, town and county to do a large business, and until human nature undergoes a great change we all know just what the result will be."

"But prohibition is purely a question of morals, and we cannot legislate morals into a people."

"I grant you that you cannot legislate morals into the people, but you can legislate the people into moral conduct and put down open immorality. Every State has its Sunday laws, and punishment awaits the man who violates them. No man dare disturb a religious gathering; and, if he does, pun-

ishment is meted out to him. If you slander me or libel me, you must respond in damages—and many other illustrations might be given. Now, these are all questions of morals, and yet we have laws governing them. They are enacted *pro bono publico*. Nobody supposes for an instant that the law forbidding the desecration of the Sabbath will awaken a reverential feeling for the day in any man, or the law forbidding the disturbance of a religious meeting will plant the germ of Christianity in his heart, but we have the laws, and men, *nolens volens*, are compelled to assume the vestments of moral deportment."

"If the State should adopt this Dispensary system, what think you would be its tendency and effect?"

"Its effect would be unfortunate, for it tends to corruption. This is conceded, when applied to the individual, and it is equally applicable to the State because the business is the same. It tends to corrupt official life. Again, it is certain to become a political machine for corrupting and controlling the voters. It will have its ramifications in every city, town and county, and the party in power will use it for selfish purposes in the effort to prolong its existence. This is as inevitable as is the law of gravitation—"

"Spare me, Hamilton! Spare me!" exclaimed Dr. Blake. "I submitted to your moralizing out of consideration for your youth and inexperience, but now that you are going into politics, I beg to be excused from further suffering. But go to work and get the legislature to submit the question of

prohibition to the dear people and I will support it. Thanks to Uncle Sam and the Inter-State commerce law, it will in no wise interfere with me, and I am the most generous of good fellows—when it costs me nothing. But why in the name of common sense Dick should sit here and allow you to irrigate him with your cold-water lecture is more than I can understand, for he agreed with you from the beginning, and for some time he has been trying to pump his bilge-water doctrine into me."

"I assure you, Gus, I have been highly entertained. But you are not law abiding. You shake your money bags in the face of the law and bid it defiance, and, at the same time, by your vote, you fasten it on the poor man who must submit. I call that consistency with a vengeance."

"Poor man! The stepping stone of the political demagogue who swindles him out of all that he has—his vote—with the promise of many good things manufactured by the man in the moon. You talk about evading the law, and you a judge on the bench! Evading, indeed, when I am moving within the law and upholding Uncle Sam and the Inter-State commerce law in the teeth of strong opposition! Your poor man no doubt has a yard full of dogs, a frowsy, freckled-face wife, and enough white-headed children to line the fence to his front yard, and the little money that he has is needed at home. He is nothing to me, and yet my vote is cast with an eye to the welfare of himself, his family, and his dogs. Yes, I say it is a disinterested and generous act on my part. But I am

tired of trying to keep you straight on moral, legal and political questions.

"Now, Hamilton, by way of answer to the moralizing, hair-splitting, subtle refining of your temperance lecture, allow me to tell you an anecdote. I had been East a few years ago, and on my return I stopped over in Washington. I was killing time along the street one day when I unexpectedly met with Bob Taylor, who was engaged in the same remunerative business. Dick, you remember Bob—a big-hearted fellow and a man who never went back on a friend. Well, we had been friends from boyhood, and after a separation of many years we had a good deal to talk about. There was a place for refreshments near by, and we went in to get a little of the needful to burnish up the pictures that hang in Memory's Hall. We had just called for our medicine, when two strangers entered. One of them said to the attendant, 'Give me my usual cock-tail,' and turning to his companion, he asked, 'What will you take?' Number two answered, 'I will take a glass of water.' Number one looked him over for a minute and said, 'You remind me of a discussion that took place down in my country between two Baptist preachers. Would you like to hear about it?' 'Yes, go ahead, as told by you, I know I will enjoy it.' 'That depends,' said number one. 'One was a young man fresh from the seminary, and, like most new graduates, he was running over with information—knew everything and just a little more. The other was an old man who had preached to the same backwoods congre-

gation for more than a quarter of a century. The water moccasin had bitten the young man, he had water on the brain and he was effervescing with temperance oratory. You know every score of years brings a deluge of that sort upon the country. The old man had no objection to a dram. He had enjoyed it from his boyhood. Age had not lessened its pleasure and, as a good churchman, he believed in respecting and maintaining the customs of the Fathers. The young man had invaded the old man's bailiwick and had sown seeds calculated to create a schism in his congregation. In the hope of reconciling conflicting elements and preventing a breach, a day was appointed for the preachers to meet at the church and discuss the temperance question before the congregation. When they entered the pulpit the house was packed. The young man had the opening and the reply. The fireworks were soon in full play. He declaimed vehemently for an hour, or more, in florid, lurid, fervent language; and he fumed, and he frothed, and he foamed. He painted many pictures for the enlightenment of his hearers and beseeched them to look at the question from a moral, a physical, a biblical, and a spiritual point of view—with the spirits left out. He sketched many torrid scenes and painted many glowing pictures with the heated colors of his imagination. He sat down with the air of the conqueror and a smile which said, "Old man, answer that if you can." The old man got up and went forward. He rested his hands upon the Bible and leaned out over the desk. He said, "My brethren,

I've been here amongst you for a long time. I've been with you in your sicknesses, and I've tried to do you all the good I knowed how. I've gone in and out before you, and you all knows me and my ways, and I've never heern a word of complaint from any of you until this young man comes round with his new-fangled idees which he says you can find in the Bible. I've no doubt this young man means well, but he don't know what he's talking about. Now, my brethren, I'm gwine to make a statement that'll settle this question between me and him, and I dare him to deny it. My brethren, I've read my Bible from Ginisis to Revelations. I've studied my Bible and I've s'arched it through and through, but nowhar in all my Bible can I find but one man calling for water, and, my brethren, he was in hell, just whar he ought to be!" '

"Number two was shaken with convulsions, and number one, without so much as smiling, took up his cocktail and began to slowly drain his glass. When number two had recovered words, he asked, 'And what became of the young man?'

" 'He slid out of the pulpit amid the riotous laughter of the entire congregation, and with saddle-bags full of temperance literature he made tracks, about four feet apart, for his horse, which he had hitched to a swinging limb. In the expressive vernacular of that section, he hasn't been heern of in them parts since.' "

"It is easy to burlesque or ridicule anything, but I did think that you knew that neither the one nor the other is argument."

"True, Dick, but either of them will sometimes knock out the bull's-eye where argument fails even to reach the mark. But we will postpone the discussion of that momentous question and go out on the piazza, smoke a cigar, pass round a dish of gossip, and let the air cool that prohibition wine which you have been drinking. Come on, Hamilton, you will find the judge a perfect gormandizer when it comes to gossip."

As they were leaving the table he said, "Dick, did you get a telegram from Kate this evening?"

"Yes, she will be here to-morrow."

CHAPTER VI

It was the evening of the fifth day after the prohibition discussion that Dr. Blake called to see Dr. Hamilton and was ushered by the office boy into the private room. When he entered, Hamilton was reclining on a lounge, and Dr. Blake exclaimed:

"There you are, as I might have expected. You young fellows have no 'git up and git' in you. You all spend your time in lounging and lying. What have you done that you have been hiding the last few days?"

"Well, good lying is a science and good lounging is comfortable, and the combination of the two of course makes a comfortable science. Having got rid of your froth, sit down and I will tell you. When I left you and the judge in the enjoyment of your feast of gossip, I came direct to my quarters, and in a short time I received a hurried call from Mr. Rudolph Seibert. I hastened to his house and found his daughter, an only child, in an agony of suffering, and the old man capering round the room like one demented and chattering like a monkey. I suppose you know him."

"Yes, I know him and his daughter. She is a beautiful girl of about eighteen summers, with the

clear German complexion and a plump, symmetrical figure. But what was the matter with her?"

"I found her suffering with intense pain in the head, the pupils of the eye very much enlarged, frequent flushings of the face, and the neck arteries swollen and throbbing."

"The devil! A case of meningitis?"

"Yes, a case of simpel and acute meningitis, and that, you know, means rapid relief or a quick death. I went to work in desperation with cold applications, blood letting by venesection and leeches, administered a strong purgative, and began to feed her on nutritious foods, which she took in liberal quantities. Later on I had a beautiful suit of chestnut hair removed and applied ice caps. I did this with reluctance, but it was a necessity. I sat by her bedside for twenty and four hours, watching every change and fighting at the threshold every evil symptom until the crisis was passed, without so much as closing my eyes. The crisis having passed, I came to my rooms and had an unbroken sleep of twelve hours. I called to see her yesterday morning and found her rational and free from pain. I returned this morning to find her convalescing beautifully, and I dismissed the case. I mounted Hero this afternoon and took a two-hour gallop in the country, and on my return I found something which has embarrassed me no little—a letter from Seibert enclosing a check for one thousand dollars. It is too much and I want your advice."

"It is not too much. Keep the check. I know

old Seibert well and I know him to be a big-hearted German. He honestly believes that you saved the life of his child, and you would only offend him if you were to return the check. Moreover, he is near the million point and will never miss the money."

"I have been wondering what induced him to send for me, for I have barely a speaking acquaintance with him, and women, you know, generally object to unmarried physicians—" Then, noticing a smile on Dr. Blake's face, he added, "You have been talking to Seibert about me?"

"Seibert and I are good friends. We sometimes take a schooner together, and it may be, in *hoching* each other, that I have mentioned your name. As to Edith,—his daughter,—I have no idea that she knew anything about it. Women in cities do not object to unmarried physicians. I think they rather prefer them, as I know from experience before I practically retired. They know that any physician, worthy of the name, knows more about their make up than they themselves know. Further, women know from experience that secrets filter through unmarried physicians less readily than through the married physician whose wife prods him and, since he must have some peace, he tells her, and she of course must gossip with one or more of her very dear friends. The senseless and mock modesty, to which you refer, may linger in the country and country towns, but you will not find it in cities. There it is, as it should be, merely a question of business and efficiency."

The opera was ablaze with light. The parquet was filled from the stage to the parterre, and the private boxes filling rapidly, for a distinguished cantatrice was to occupy the stage that night. Judge Somers, Dr. Blake, and Kate were in the Somers box, as Hamilton, in evening dress, accompanied by Seibert and Van Tromp, made his way to his box with the beautiful opera glass of his rollicking days in his hand.

When Dr. Blake saw him conducting Seibert and Van Tromp, he exclaimed:

"Shade of Talleyrand! What diplomacy! Did you see him?"

"See whom," said Kate. "Talleyrand? No, and from what I know of his career I have no desire to see either him or his shade."

She had seen and recognized Hamilton as he entered his box with Seibert and Van Tromp.

"Fudge! I meant Hamilton. Did you see him?"

"I thought you mentioned Talleyrand. You forget that I have been absent for several months and that this medical wonder, if I am to believe the half you say about him, escaped from his cocoon during my absence. You must remember that I have never so much as had an introdutcion to this paragon of blood-letters and pill-makers. Where is he?"

"Are you trying to be sarcastic? Feminine acidity is so natural and so superabundant that it ought never to be cultivated. Look along the second row until you come to Seibert and Van Tromp. You

know them, and you know that Seibert is king among the Germans and that Van Tromp hopes to be his son-in-law."

She gave a quick glance along the boxes, saying: "I see them and I suppose, from what you say, that the gentleman sitting with them is Dr. Hamilton."

"Yes, that is he, and I admire his diplomacy. It is masterly."

"Diplomacy! Really, Uncle Gus, I fail to understand you. It all seems very natural to me. I understand that Dr. Hamilton attended Edith in an alarming case of illness and effected a surprising cure. Of course, Mr. Seibert is grateful and Van Tromp could not be ungrateful to the man who saved his fiancee. In addition, the performance to-night is taken from the German composers."

"Pshaw! Crawl off, Kate; you are dense to-night and you make me tired." The doctor turned resolutely from her to the stage, while Kate put her handkerchief to her face to hide a smile.

In the meantime, Jack and his friends had got themselves comfortably seated and had begun to look the audience over. Jack lifted the glasses to his eyes and studied the pit for some time. Finishing his survey of the pit, he began to sweep the boxes, one by one, and Kate, who had been secretly watching him, looked away as the glasses came to her box. She was conscious that they lingered on her person and, in spite of her will, she felt herself slightly flushing. Jack looked no farther; he lowered his glasses; he knew that he had seen his patient of the wreck; he was satisfied, and turned to

the stage, remarking to Van Tromp, as he did so, "It is a grand audience and does credit to the city."

The performance was a great success. Any attempt to describe it would be idle and boring to those who are familiar with such scenes, while to picture it, with any hope of enabling those who are not familiar to understand, would be mere folly and a waste of paint. The prima-donna was encored again and again, to which she always prettily and modestly responded by reappearing and bowing. But the triumphant and bird-like notes of her last song so enwrapped the house with enthusiasm that the audience would not quiet with her reappearance and a bow. The audience continued to encore and call until she came out upon the stage again and, when stillness was restored, said:

"My friends, I am deeply affected by the beautiful ovation you are giving me. You must all know that I am very fond of ballad singing; that I am now in my native land, and while it has been my fortune to wander in many countries, my heart has been ever with my childhood's home." She then sang, Home, Sweet Home, with a pathos and power that have been rarely equaled, for the words were pulsing with heart throbs. There were aching throats and brimming eyes at the ending of the song. There was a moment of eloquent silence, and then the house shook with applause, amid which the singers disappeared, the foot-lights went out, and the audience began to make for the doors.

As Jack was passing the Somers box on his way

out he found the occupants still waiting, and at the door was Dr. Blake, who said:

"Hamilton, I want to see you a minute, but you must come in here; you can't keep your feet against this crush."

Jack stepped in, and the doctor, evidently to the surprise of Kate, who was standing up and in the act of returning the salutation of a gentleman, turned to her, saying:

"I want to introduce you to this bundle of female rights—Miss Somers, Dr. Hamilton, and vice versa. When we can catch her in a good humor and not mounted and riding her hobby, we call her Kate."

Jack was in the act of making his most perfect bow, when Kate stopped him by reaching out her hand and saying:

"Dr. Hamilton, since my return home I have heard Uncle Gus speak of you in such a way as to make me anticipate this meeting with pleasure."

She was looking into his eyes as she said this, and she spoke with the perfect ease of the society woman and without the slightest trace of embarrassment or recognition.

"I am fortunate in my spokesman," was Jack's reply, as he received her palm into his own.

"Oh, I don't know about that," continued Kate. "He hasn't gone beyond the professional lines as yet, but I must confess that he awakened my curiosity when he spoke of you as the whole of the surgical and medical sciences in full flower."

"Hamilton, please conduct that Sapphira to her

carriage before she falls down and has to be carried out. Dick, there isn't a widow left in the house to see you, so stop your posing and come on."

As they passed out, Jack said:

"Did I understand you to say you had been absent from the city?"

"Yes, I spent the winter in California with a classmate and had a delightful time. The climate is perfect, as good as that of Italy."

"Your appearance is proof that it agreed with you."

"Appearances are sometimes misleading. Almost anything agrees with the person in health, and my health has always been perfect."

"From what Dr. Blake said, I thought perhaps you had been on a lecturing tour, advocating woman's rights."

"Oh, that is some of Uncle Gus's nonsense."

"And yet you allow his nonsense to excite your curiosity?"

"Certainly, why not? And then you know it is sometimes not only amusing, but entertaining to take the measure of his nonsense."

By this time they had reached the carriage, where the Judge and Dr. Blake were waiting for them. Before entering, Kate said:

"Dr. Hamilton, as I told you, I have been absent from home all the winter. On next Thursday evening I give a little party—the number is limited, but if you will come we will make room for you."

"I will come. Do you remember the tradition

of the Eastern philosopher who applied for admission into a certain school?"

"I can't recall that I have ever heard of such a tradition."

"I will tell you Thursday evening if you care to hear it," and he bowed the carriage away.

CHAPTER VII

The imposing residence of Judge Somers was situated upon an elevation and back about one hundred feet from the street, in the midst of a grove of native trees of magnificent growth. The place was richly shaded and the lawn was beautifully kept. The surroundings bespoke a haven of undisturbed rest and quiet comfort, free from the hum of the busy crowd and the rattling din of passing wheels. Watching the trend of its growth, Judge Somers had bought the site when the city was in its infancy, and at a cost trifling in comparison with its present value.

When Hamilton entered on the evening of the reception, he was met by Dr. Blake, Kate, and her companion, Miss Stuart, who was assisting her in receiving and to whom he was introduced. She was a pretty, petite brunette, with merry mischief lurking in her black eyes. Kate was dressed simply but with exquisite taste, and as she stood with easy grace and quiet dignity in the gas light, Jack thought her, perhaps, the most attractive, if not the most beautiful, woman he had ever met. Who can describe or give expression to the subtle effect of an attractive and beautiful woman upon the masculine heart? Who can paint her in words and

"trick her off in air," so as to present her as an actuality to the mental vision? Regularity of feature and symmetry of figure may enter into, but they cannot of themselves make the beauty of woman. These we may picture, but we miss the play of the animated features, the soul-lit eyes with the long lashes half veiling their light, the arch look, the Eoline music of the voice, gentle and soft and low; the confiding glance, the wooing smile, the sunny face aglow with innocence and pleasure.

"Well, Kate," said Dr. Blake, "the last of the laggards has come—turn on the foot-lights, run up the curtain, and on with the dance."

Hamilton looked at Kate inquiringly, who said: "That is some more of Uncle Gus's effervescing nonsense. Since coming here, a german to close the evening has been suggested by some of our friends; but we are here for conversation and music, with billiards, and the german as altogether secondary."

"I was speaking merely with reference to the pleasure of our feminine friends, Hamilton, and to give them an opportunity to disport themselves in the one accomplishment in which they most excel. To dance well calls for lightness of foot and, I may add, lightness of head, because if the gray matter is in sufficient quantity to become addled with the gliding and rotary motion the foot will lose its cunning."

"I have wondered," said Miss Stuart, "why it is that you are so fond of the ballroom, but now I

understand. Your remark about the gray matter has enlightened me."

Dr. Blake made a face at her and said: "Ada, the remark was general and not intended to apply to you, so far as lightness of foot is concerned, because it is a well-known fact that your partners, the day after the dance, are in need of ointment and can wear only slippers—further this deponent saith not."

"Uncle Gus, we know that all of Attica belongs to you. Do take charge of Dr. Hamilton and conduct him, and don't stand here wasting the superabundance of your gray matter in badinage with Ada."

Conducted by Dr. Blake, he entered the drawing-room to find present about a dozen of each sex. With the men he had a speaking acquaintance and he was presented to the ladies. The conversation was immediately resumed, and it soon became animated in reviewing the life of Shakespeare as a man, a poet, a scholar, a wit, an actor, an author, and as a student of human nature.

Mr. Dalzell, continuing, said: "I take no stock in the theory that Bacon was the author of any of the dramas, or plays, or poems credited to Shakespeare, and yet there is a good deal that I cannot explain to my satisfaction without considering him a plagiarist."

"To what do you have reference?" said Judge Somers.

"I refer to his want of scholarship."

"Some of the ablest and most learned critics,

after investigating this question, concede his scholarship, and you must remember that he was a universal genius and excelled in everything he touched."

"I don't think 'concede' is the right word, for I have no doubt these same critics began their investigation with an earnest desire to find his scholarship. The weakness of posterity is to apotheosize the past. It is there we find the giants, and tradition clothes them with virtues and accomplishments unknown to their contemporaries. But here I think the facts are against the theory."

"You know there was a good grammar school at Stratford. That is a fact. It is also a fact that the mother tongue and the classics were well taught in such schools, better than they are at the present day, and upon this foundation the genius of Shakespeare built."

"Grant all that you say about the school and its efficiency; where is the evidence that he attended the school for any considerable time, or that he was a student while attending?"

"The proof is to be seen in his plays, dramas, and sonnets, for it is admitted that he never attended any other school."

"You beg the question. It seems to me the cold facts look the other way. That he was a poacher and, in his boyhood, stole deer and rabbits from Sir Thomas Lucy is not to be questioned. Now, the life of a poacher is not conducive to scholarly attainments, and this, coupled with the scurrilous doggerel that he wrote about Sir Thomas, shows

that he was wanting in morals and that he led the life of a vagabond—so much so, that he was forced to leave Stratford. Again, his father was in straitened circumstances at this time, and William was early called on to assist in supporting the family; and, because of this, was put to the wool staple and butcher business. Add to all this, the fact that he ruined the woman he afterwards married, and we have proof, conclusive to my mind, that he must have been leading a dissolute and disreputable life in his boyhood."

"A fair shot, Dalzell, a fair shot," said Dr. Blake.

"It is true he married Anne Hathaway, but I have no doubt that the ceremony partook of a military character. Afterwards, when he wrote his will, he forgot to mention his wife, and in order to show how dearly he loved her and how deeply she nestled in his heart, it was necessary to interline the will that she might receive the munificent bequest of a 'second best bed with the furniture.' To this evidence of his family affection, add the fact that he died from a drunken debauch, and we can readily believe that the reputation of his boyhood clung to him as the years advanced. We can also easily understand that the man who would rob him of his good name would get something that would not enrich the taker. The old poacher was telling a simple, honest truth, and yet the world, for about three centuries, has been in a state of ecstasy and agape with admiration over what it is pleased to call the beautiful sentiment."

"I do not set Shakespeare up as a moral exemplar," said Judge Somers, "but he is not the moral monster that you and Dalzell would make him. His writings prove this. No man can read and study him without being impressed with the fact that he fully appreciated the vital truths of Christianity. His contemporaries speak of him as 'gentle' and 'sweet,' and Jonson in his 'Discoveries' speaks of him as a man 'indeed honest and of an open nature.' Such language and epithets could not be applied to a moral reprobate. But, admitting that he was wanting in morals, it does not follow that he was wanting in scholarship, and that is the question we are considering. The field of literature is dotted with men who lay no claim to morals and virtues, but who excel in learning and scholarship. As to his will, the law made ample provision for his wife, and Shakespeare knew it."

"If she was fortunate in law, she was certainly unfortunate in her husband. He made many bequests in his will, and the fact that he forgot his wife in the original draft shows his indifference and want of affection. Dalzell, I will take a shot at the proof drawn from his writings and leave the scholarship to you. A man's writings do not always reflect his moral nature. Tom Moore wrote 'Come, ye disconsolate,' and Byron wrote 'Hebrew Melodies,' and the latter somewhere says,

> " 'Devotion wafts the mind above,
> But heaven itself descends in love.'

But I have yet to hear that such passages have

relieved this precious pair from being moral scamps and wily libertines. According to Dick, however, they are now standing near the Great White Throne waving palms in their hands and shouting hosannas to the Lord. Byron, also, gave us some sweet sentiments about the watch-dog's honest bark and about an eye that would look brighter when the absent one returned, from which we would naturally infer that his domestic relations were all that could be desired and that he was a most exemplary husband. No, such writings only show that the most profligate men have their serious moments; that the spark of divinity breathed into them cannot be wholly drugged; that at times it will assert itself—but they do not show character."

"I know," said Dalzell, "that want of morals is no proof whatever of want of scholarship, and I referred to this merely to show that his youthful life was at war with that of the student. Moreover, there is not only no proof, but there is not even a tradition, that he ever attended the grammar school at Stratford."

"It matters very little, Dalzell, when, where, or how he acquired his scholarship. That he was a scholar cannot be doubted. Upton credits him with considerable scholarship, and Ben Jonson, his personal friend, is of the same opinion. His writings prove him a master of the English language; his frequent use of Latin derivatives, in their radical sense, proves his knowledge of that language; his occasional use of French and Italian

shows that he had given some attention to those languages, and his knowledge of law, as displayed in his writings, is more than that of the ordinary layman. These are facts that cannot be accounted for by saying that he was a universal genius; for, while genius may speed the learner, it cannot beget scholarship. What explanation will you give?"

"As I said, I take no stock in the Baconian theory. It is the internal evidence to be found in his writings, the very illustrations which you give, that cause me to suspect him of plagiarism. We know that he was a wayward boy—there is no proof that he ever attended a school; we know that at eighteen he went to London and joined a company of actors; we know that his friend Ben Jonson said that he knew but little Latin and less Greek. Such are the facts, and yet we find him cited as a master of English and familiar with the delicate shading of words; we find him using Latin derivatives in their radical sense, which calls for thorough knowledge. Under the known facts, it seems to me it might well devolve upon those who claim such perfect scholarship for him to explain when, where and how he acquired his learning. It may be explained after the manner of Wolf's explanation of the composition of the Iliad—which explanation, by the way, is now generally accepted. His theory holds that the Iliad is made up of many poems, or songs, by many authors, and handed down from generation to generation by wandering rhapsodists and professional minstrels,—among whom Homer was chief,—and that they were col-

lected by Pisistratus and committed to writing after the introduction of that art. In like manner, I would, to some extent, explain the writings of Shakespeare. In the time of Good Queen Bess the stage had become an attraction, and dramatic composition, play-writing, and novel-writing had grown into popularity. That they met the approval of the Queen was well known, and this of itself would give favor and currency to such literature. As a consequence, younger sons, and impecunious men of ability and learning, in the hope of making an honest penny, and living in the public eye, contested for supremacy in this field of letters. Such was the fact when Shakespeare went to London and joined the school of actors. Possessed of a master mind, and conscious of great dramatic powers, he began to study the dramas, plays and novels of the day, and after a time he began contesting for the prize. He was an indifferent actor, but gained popularity by writing upon well known and popular themes. Indeed, it might be safely asserted that he, in some instances, merely recast plays and dramas that were favorites with the people. He did not hesitate to adopt the very language of the author from whom he drew. His constructive faculty was on a par with his many other remarkable gifts, and I readily grant that the commonplace sayings of others, in passing through his wonderful mind, were transmuted into poetry that will never die. But without compunction he adopted the ideas, the thoughts and, now and then, even the language of others, as his own;

and had he lived in the present century the critics would have drawn the parallel column on him and damned him as a plagiarist. In this way he might have displayed a learning he did not possess, and we will never be able to say how much he really originated or how much he unconcernedly appropriated. But, understand me, I do not mean to undervalue him. In the literary world he is without a peer, and if he now and then appropriated the material of others, he fashioned it as only he could and clothed it with immortality."

Judge Somers did not reply, but, turning to Hamilton, he asked:

"What do you think of the theory advanced by Dalzell?"

"I have never studied the subject, and therefore I have no right to an opinion. One thing, however, is certain, if Shakespeare did not write the dramas, plays, poems, and sonnets which have come down to us in his name, the author is unknown, and I can see no good reason for withdrawing them from him and marking them anonymous. We have them as his and, like honest Sancho, I do not care to look a gift horse in the mouth."

"Hold, Hamilton," said Dr. Blake, "not another word! There is a modicum of sense in what you have just said floating around somewhere. Dick, you and Dalzell are a pair of old fossils. If you want to continue your lecture on paleology, go to the library, where you can mingle with your kindred dead to the relief of the living. Get out—

you are back numbers—wet blankets—and let us young folks have our way. We want the frolicsome present and not the spectral past. Kate, what is it that you, Ada and Sue Maxwell have been bobbing your heads and gesticulating so violently about? I have been watching you three for some time from the corner of my left eye in the hope of a dislocation and a fee."

"Uncle Gus, we have been discussing some of Plato's teachings. Sue says—"

"What, that old fraud! Why, he advocated the destruction of domestic relations, and believed in the community of wives and the pooling of property. He was the first to advance the doctrine of free love and communism. He must have been unfortunate in his marital relations, or got his ideas of domestic happiness from hearing Xantippe entertain his old schoolmaster, Socrates. I suppose you were discussing him from this point of view?"

"No such thing! You are an abominable distorter and you know it. She says there is no such thing as Platonic affection, and Ada pretends to agree with her. Plato taught the contrary and, from experience and observation, I am inclined to agree with the old philosopher. What do you think of it?"

"What do I think of Platonic affection? Well, I think it was the invention of his Satanic Majesty, and ever since he set it going he has been sitting close by enjoying the fun."

"Kate," said Ada, "I am wavering, and since

hearing Dr. Blake I incline to your side of the question. I never feel safe unless I am in opposition so far as he is concerned. Dr. Hamilton, give us your opinion. You are not old enough to be cynical, and I hope you are too good-natured to slake your thirst with evil speaking."

"My, what a little spitfire!" interjected Dr. Blake.

Hamilton was laughing when he asked, "Do you remember what Byron said of friendship in a woman?"

"I can't say that I ever knew, much less remember the saying of that immaculate worthy upon this very important question."

"He says friendship in a woman is love full fledged, waiting for some fine day to fly."

Kate was looking him full in the face and, as he finished, remarked:

"Dr. Hamilton, I am sorry you said that."

"I beg pardon, Miss Somers, it was Byron that said it," replied Hamilton.

"All the same, when asked for your opinion you adopted it as your own."

Hamilton flushed, and was entering upon his defense, when Miss Maxwell interrupted by saying: "But I do not consider the quotation from Byron pertinent, for there is a clear distinction between friendship and affection of the Platonic order."

"It is needless, Sue," put in Kate, "to analyze and dissect, and it is difficult to appreciate imaginary lines. I suppose," she continued with an ironical smile, "I must yield for the present, for the au-

thorities cited are of great weight. Dr. Hamilton furnishes Byron and Uncle Gus furnishes his Satanic Majesty—congenial spirits. Uncle Gus, I know, is always loyal to his friends, and I am satisfied that it was only after careful study of this invention, as he calls it, and candid consultation with its author, that he would offer it as the expression of his opinion upon an esthetical question. But I do so hate to give up my faith in mental affection and unselfish friendship, that—"

Dr. Blake interrupted with, "Sue Maxwell, hand me your smelling bottle; I am almost suffocated with compliments—quick, or I swoon."

"Come down gently, gently, Doctor, and gracefully, just as you think you have seen it done, and I will try and catch you. Knowing that I would meet the friend of his inventive Majesty, I left my nerves at home, and of course I never suspected that my vinaigrette would be needed. I'm so sorry!"

"*Et tu, Brute!* exclaimed the doctor, and, lifting his hands appealingly, he ejaculated, "Save me from my friends!"

"Listen a moment," said Hamilton; "I want to say something. I—"

"Hear, hear," called Kate, clapping her hands, "Dr. Hamilton wants to say something. You girls stop your laughing while Dr. Hamilton says something. Be quiet, Ada, and give Byron's friend a hearing."

His voice was slightly vibrant as he continued: "Yes, Miss Somers is right. I want to say some-

thing. I am not willing to be misunderstood and stood aside without a hearing. I agree with Miss Maxwell. There is a clear distinction between Platonic affection and friendship, and the dividing line is neither shadowy nor imaginary. The first is of the brain and purely intellectual; the second is of the heart and purely emotional. The existence of both is generally admitted and a common sentiment is rarely, if ever, at fault." Turning to Dr. Blake, he said, "*Vox populi, vox Dei,* you know."

"Hamilton, that is the voice of the demagogue and the refrain of the politician. Coming down through the centuries, I hear the shouts of the multitude and the cry is, 'Crucify him, crucify him!' There you have your *vox populi.* What do you say to that?"

"I answer," replied Sue Maxwell, "that it proves the aphorism, for it was the people carrying out the designs of Deity that had been foretold centuries before."

"How about Aaron and his golden calf, Sue? The Israelites knew that the true God was only a short way off, on the near-by mountain, talking face to face with Moses, and yet it was the voice of the people that caused Aaron to make the golden calf. With what design of Providence you will try to dove-tail this yearling, I am at a loss to conjecture. Faugh! I don't believe that Providence had any hand in making that calf, but I do believe it was made through the general cussedness of the Israelites and the moral cowardice of Aaron. When cornered in argument it is really amusing to

see with what complacency the followers of Calvin shelter themselves behind the divine decrees."

"Doctor, as I happen to know that you agree with me, I shall not pick up your gauntlet and give you an opportunity to shift the argument."

"*Vox populi, vox Dei!*" exclaimed Dr. Blake. "There never was a greater fraud wrapt up in so many words. With this cry Robespiere, Danton & Co. set the Reign of Terror going. Many other instances might be cited from history. But I am wasting my theology, as well as my knowledge of history and human nature, on a set of benighted heathen, and feeling that I have done my duty by you ornaments of the wall, I shall leave you in search of congenial companions and a little fun."

CHAPTER VIII

The conversation became general, and wherever the doctor was found the fun became 'fast and furious.' Hamilton glided into it with the ease of the society man, and he was everywhere cordially received. All had been going 'merry as a marriage bell' for some time, when Dalzell stood up and said, "I am for a game of billiards, and I challenge the company with Miss Sue for my partner."

There was a silence for a moment, and then Hamilton responded, "If Miss Somers will play, I accept the challenge."

"How do you know I play the game?"

"The fact that you have a private table is presumptive evidence, as your father will tell you."

"On a rainy day, when I can't go out, I admit that I do sometimes roll the balls about—merely for exercise, you know."

"I believe the game is played by rolling the balls about?"

"Dr. Hamilton, I would be very sorry to disappoint you, for I feel assured we are beaten before the game begins. Mr. Dalzell is almost a professional, and Sue handles the cue with the skill of an expert."

"All right, Miss Somers, we can do our best,

and if we can't win we can learn of the victors how the game should be played."

The billiard-room was brilliantly lighted from above. Hamilton picked his cue with care, and turning to the table he placed a ball and sent it angling to the four sides. As he did so, Dalzell was looking on and said, "You find the table perfect and I see you are no novice."

"I do not claim to be an expert."

"You are modest, Dr. Hamilton. No expert could have sent the ball with more skill, and I notice it stopped at the starting point. We will play three balls, and not more than three points by hugging them in the corner. Ada, you and Van Tromp keep the game. Miss Sue, it is not going to be an easy victory—so do your best, and gloves for the winning lady."

"May I ask," said Hamilton, "what you mean by gloves for the winning lady?"

"I mean that the losing party shall forfeit to the winning party a pair of gloves."

"Isn't that a wager on the result of the game?"

"Oh, no, it is intended merely as a compliment to the lady. Nothing more."

"But the compliment is to be determined by the result of the game. If you win, Miss Maxwell will receive the compliment; if we win, Miss Somers will receive it. It seems to me you make a distinction without a difference."

During the conversation, Dalzell had been rolling the balls here and there along the table, and Miss Maxwell, who admired his skill, was watch-

ing the touch of the cue and the turn of the ball. Kate had selected her cue and turned to the speakers, just as Dalzell stopped his ball rolling, and said: "I think there is a difference—the difference between a prize and a wager. Moreover, it is only a trifle, but it gives zest and interest to the game."

"A prize," replied Hamilton, "is something offered by a third party to the contestants. Here, however, what you call the prize is furnished by the contestants themselves and the winning party takes it. Sugar coat as we may, it seems to me to be nothing short of a bet on the result of the game."

Hesitating for a moment, he added: "I am very sorry, Mr. Dalzell, that I accepted your challenge, and had I known it was subject to this condition I certainly would not have considered it. Van Tromp will play and I will assist Miss Stuart in keeping the count."

There was a look of surprise and something almost akin to a sneer on Dalzell's handsome face as he said: "Dr. Hamilton has set up a school of reform since he left the city of New York. Don't you fear to soil your wings if you aid and abet the game by keeping the count?"

The blood rushed to Hamilton's face, and ebbing left it very pale as he replied in a tone of voice lower than usual: "It seems that Mr. Dalzell has been investigating my past, and I assure him his findings are of the utmost indifference to me. There is nothing that I wish to hide or conceal

from his honorable pursuit, and I give him full license to retail his information until he is surfeited with the pleasure. As Mr. Dalzell's means may not have been commensurate with his desires, I will open a school of information for his benefit. I inherited a fortune of several hundred thousand dollars, and today, comparatively speaking, I am a poor man. There is scarcely a game of chance at which I did not become an adept. In the beginning there was merely a desire to kill time. But such games soon began to pall, and then, to give them zest and interest, we put up trifles on the result. But trifles soon ceased to satisfy the appetite for zest and interest, and it was not long before I was forced to admit to myself that we were playing for moderate stakes. The passions grow with indulgence as surely as the muscles strengthen with exercise, and I found the stakes so immoderate that I would place hundreds on the turn of a card or the whirl of a wheel. In London, in Paris, in Berlin, and elsewhere on the continent I led a life of gaiety and abandon that commanded the attention of even those pleasure-seeking cities. Sometimes I played desperately, but never long at one sitting. For several years I led the life of a sporting gentleman and rustled it with the sons of dukes and lords and bankers; but, without knowing it, during all this time I had anchors cast to windward—I was fond of my profession, I never drank to excess, and now and then the face of my dead mother would come back to me. A longing for home came upon me, and I returned to New

York—ostensibly to practice a profession which I wore only as an ornament. For two or three years I floated in society and in general led a wild life. The state of my finances brought me to my senses and, like the prodigal, I determined to return to my father's house. I went back to the family hearth-stone and resolved to begin life anew. To do this it was necessary to reform. To reform, it was necessary to cut loose from the old associations of years and the habits of a past life, for to linger in the old ways is to cultivate the old life. Yes, I have set up a reformatory school, but I am sending only one scholar—myself. I am willing for others to do as they please. Trifles to them might be death to me, and I shall never take the risk. I deeply regret the necessity of lifting in this presence the veil from the charnel house of my past, but I felt it was better for me to tell the miserable story than to leave it to others. There is always hope of a man who has been blessed with a pious mother, for the seeds of her planting will bear fruit some day. I know that I am safe, for the mother's trainings have come back to her boy; her teachings follow me wherever I go, and like a benediction from the home of the sainted dead her influence is ever around me and about me. To-night I feel her fingers tangling in my hair as I kneel upon her knee and she leads me in that sweetest of childhood's prayer — Now I lay me down to sleep—and if I cannot share in her strong religious convictions, I can at least honor and respect them." Turning toward the door, he added,

"And now I must bid you good night." Before Hamilton could reach the door, after bidding them good night, Dalzell called:

"Dr. Hamilton, wait a minute."

Hamilton threw back his head and turned to him with a look of haughty expectancy. Dalzell continued: "I know your temper is justly tearing at its leashes, but I want you to remain and give me time to make my apology. In the presence of these ladies I wantonly wounded you, and in their presence I want to withdraw my every look and word. From my heart, I regret and take back every offensive word I said, and I ask that you forgive me and, if you can, forget that they were uttered."

Hamilton interrupted him with: "Don't say another word, Mr. Dalzell, not another word! You have said all a gentleman could say, and the man that would ask more is no gentleman."

As their hands met, Dalzell continued: "When in New York, a few weeks ago, I incidentally heard from mutual friends that you were a society man, a loyal friend and a boon companion; but I give you my word that I neither asked questions nor did I hear anything derogatory to your character as a gentleman. I heard nothing of your past history, and your details were as much a surprise to me as they must have been to these ladies. When you declined to play for the gloves, not knowing the reason, I frankly admit that I thought you were assuming a virtue you did not possess. Moreover, it sounded to me like a rebuke in a cov-

ert way, and in a moment of irritation I spoke. Your frankness tonight conquered me and proved your manhood and your courage, and your reasons for refusing the glove contest I honor and approve. The balls are waiting for the cue, what say you?"

Hamilton looked at Kate, who shook her head and said: "Not to-night. I think we had better join our friends in the drawing-room."

As they passed out, Kate said to Hamilton, "You have made a friend to-night."

He looked at her inquiringly, and she continued, "I mean Mr. Dalzell, and he is a friend worth having."

"I hope I have made more than one friend to-night," replied Hamilton.

"I am satisfied that Mr. Van Tromp was already your friend."

"How about the ladies? I would like very much to have a friend among them."

"Oh, you know Byron says, 'Friendship in a woman—' "

"Hang Byron," interrupted Hamilton, "and forget what he said. I made the quotation merely to fall in with the humor of Dr. Blake. I do not believe a word of it."

As they entered the drawing-room, Dr. Blake called out: "Who has the laurel wreath? Let the victor place it on his brow that we may behold his glory."

It was Dalzell who answered: "We set up a mutual admiration society, and we were so pleased

with each other that we forgot all about the game. You have no idea how much we enjoyed each other's society, freed from the watchful eye of age and the envious eye of the callow young. Dr. Hamilton and I will try conclusions some other time—a pleasure postponed."

The evening had reached the musical stage, a sure sign that the couples in general were growing weary of each other and conversation had ceased to be entertaining. Several good performers had played instrumental pieces from the old masters, when Sue Maxwell was begged for a song. She really sang well, and gave two songs, with Ada singing the alto. Is it true that alto is generally sung by small women?

The german failed to materialize, and toward the close of the evening a general call was made on Kate for a song. She excelled in vocal music and, like the birds, she sang because it was her nature. Her voice had a compass of two full octaves, and had been thoroughly trained by some of the best singers on both sides of the water—until it was not only bird-like, but it was flute-like. When the call was made she was standing near Hamilton. At first she gave no heed to the call, but on its repetition she turned to Hamilton and said in a tone half of inquiry and half of assertion: "You sing?"

"I admit that I have been known to try."

"I know you sing and that you have a barytone voice. Come, I want you to sing with me and give these people a pleasant surprise."

As they went to the piano, she said, "I prefer ballads."

"I quite agree with you—less science but more melody."

Seating herself and running her fingers over the keys, she said, "I am going to give them Annie Laurie. I think you are familiar with it."

Hamilton nodded his head, and she fell into a soft accompaniment, and began to sing in that pure and flute-like tone that is seldom heard off the stage. At the end of the first line she glanced up and Hamilton joined her with his mellow barytone. Their voices blended beautifully, the execution was perfect, the words went panting with emotion to the hearts of the listeners, and at the close of the song there was more than one glistening eye.

There was a clamoring for another song, and Kate responded with Coming Through the Rye. Hamilton joined her. She finished amid applause and demands for more, but she rose up, resolutely saying, "No, the humor is not upon me to-night, and to sing well the feelings must mingle with the song."

"Come, Kate, you are no bread and butter Miss, and you ought to know you are too old to be putting on airs. I want to hear Hamilton again. It has been a long time since I heard anything equal to his barytone."

"Uncle Gus, you are treading on forbidden ground. I thought you knew that it is rude to refer to a lady's age in company. To think of the time I have wasted on you, trying to teach you

manners! I have no objection to hearing Dr. Hamilton's barytone again, but I decline to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for you. So far as I am concerned, I know when to stop, and that in my opinion shows not only something of intellect, but an insight into human nature worthy of great commendation.

"My dear girl, compared to you Minerva was a mere tallow-dip. I have a feeling appreciation of the sentiment wrapped up in your closing remark, and I am delighted to agree with you—it is so seldom. Few persons, particularly public speakers, know when to quit. If they have made an indifferent beginning, they wriggle on, trying to improve, and only wriggle deeper in the mud. If they have made a happy beginning, they think they can keep up the pace, and too often continue until they end in platitudes. They haven't got sense enough to know that when they get the iron hot, the striking consists in quitting."

"Yes," remarked Dalzell, "it has always been a matter of surprise to me that any man could suppose he could go on saying good and entertaining things by the hour, or that he could be so poor a judge of human nature as not to know that attention can be held in tension only for a short time."

"And yet such cattle," said Dr. Blake, "are numerous, especially among preachers. By the way, I think I can give the inspiration of Kate's closing remark. Last Sunday Kate managed to inveigle me into going to church with her. Of course we went to hear her pastor — Rev. Dr.

Strong. Being a Presbyterian, he believes in John Calvin, John Knox, Jonathan Edwards, and all the other Johns and Jonathans, and in final perseverance, which last, to do him justice, he exemplifies in his sermons. I noticed that Kate got fidgety, shifted her posture and position every now and then, and was, more or less, attentive to the dresses and headgear of the women; but, poor child, I had no idea that she was really suffering. Well, I held on until he struck fifthly, and then I went to sleep—mentally you will understand—and I did not wake up until he was pronouncing the benediction. Of course, I sat apparently staring at the preacher, but I neither saw nor heard him; and I will bet a last year's bird-nest against a dress-suit that nine-tenths of the congregation were in my condition. Nowhere on earth can you find another set of men so madly and so insanely in love with the sound of their own voices. They forget that even a young man went to sleep in a window and fell down dead under the masterful preaching of the mighty Paul. I have always sympathized with that young man, and I believe the incident was recorded to show the effect and the danger of long sermons."

"Uncle Gus, you are trying to be funny by slandering, which is not only bad taste, but bad morals. There was no inveigling about it, and you know that you are fond of Dr. Strong and that he is an able and eloquent preacher."

"Oh, yes, I admit that he is Strong, if that will satisfy you. But I was not speaking of his ability

or his eloquence, but the length of his sermons, and I stick to it. Any man who imagines that he can preach twice every Sunday to the same congregation for an hour, or more, each time, and furnish a luncheon, by way of a prayer-meeting in the middle of the week, and hope to entertain all the time is entitled to long ears. A sermon to do good should be short and practical and pungent. All else is *vox et proetera nihil.* A sermon that fails to penetrate the conscience is a failure."

"A Daniel come to judgment; yea, a Daniel," was Kate's remark.

"Sarcasm is not argument, my dear girl, a fact which I hope you will not forget. But say what you may, your own experience approves of all I have said. As you intimate, I am a Presbyterian by education, at least, but I am not blind to their shortcomings, or rather to their longcomings. For instance, take that second prayer, which must always be some fifteen or twenty minutes long, as if the Lord would forget the wants of his people unless his attention is called to them in retail and in detail."

"Doctor," said Hamilton, "you remind me of what I once read of a certain society man. He went everywhere, was a great success and was in great demand. When asked how he managed to make himself so popular, he said, in substance, it is very simple. Of course I know where I am going and have reason to suppose I will meet with certain people. Before going I think over such topics and themes as will probably be entertaining

to the company, pass them through the mind in a conversational way, making an opening here and there for an anecdote and preparing at this point or that point to get off a *bon mot*. After some general conversation I begin to maneuver its flow into the prepared channels. This is much easier done than anyone who hasn't tried it would suspect. Being somewhat prepared, you can be more or less brilliant all along the line. You keep this up until you have told your anecdotes and fired your *bon mots*. Reserve the best for the last and leave before its flavor has lost itself upon the social palate."

"That's the idea, Hamilton, and your anecdote is a happy illustration. He was a fine judge of human nature, if he did make a science of his pleasures. His leaving was always a regret to the company, and I'll warrant that he was not only a social success, but he was considered a brilliant talker and a great wit. But we have preached enough about prosy preachers. I want some more music—none of your scientific, double, semi-demi-hemi quivers, but the good old-fashioned melody to be found only in coon songs. Van Tromp, hand Ada that banjo that Kate has tried to hide behind the piano."

"Oh, no, Doctor!" Ada exclaimed. "Give me the guitar and I will try and amuse you a little while."

"Not a bit of it. I don't want any of your Spanish serenades to-night. I want melody and a plenty of it. Give her the banjo, Van Tromp. She can

beat Sweeney in his best days, and you must help her with your bass and Dalzell with his tenor."

Entering into the spirit of the doctor, Ada took the instrument, which was a beauty of its kind, and soon had the strings in order. After picking the harmonies with skill and power, she threw back her head and sang 'Jine the Cavalry' to the accompaniment of her flying fingers, with a zest that showed that it was a favorite and that she was swayed by its melody. Dalzell and Van Tromp joined her, and the company, catching the enthusiasm of the player, rose to their feet applauding. Dr. Blake called out: "Go it, Sweeney! I can see old Jeb with his golden spurs, his waving plume, and his flower-bedecked uniform, mounted on his charger and drinking in your music."

Kate, in the meantime, had made the circuit of the room among her guests, and had returned near the player, where Hamilton stood. Noticing the remark, he asked her why the doctor referred to General Stuart.

"She is a kinsman and proud of it. Her people came from Maryland, and her father was a cousin german of the great Confederate leader."

"She is justified in her pride, for he was a great leader and the most knightly knight of them all. His was a spirit of chivalry, and had he lived in other days he would have led a crusade."

The song was brought to an end amid the clapping of hands and the waving of handkerchiefs. Ada sat toying with the strings for a minute, and answering to the call for another song she broke

into Dixie. With flushed cheek and sparkling eye she sang with electrical effect, carrying her audience with her. Doctor Blake called out: "Just look at the little rebel! She hears the blast of the bugle, the roll of the drum, and the tread of armies as they rush to the conflict."

"Her heart is in her songs," said Hamilton to Kate. "How she loves the memories of the Lost Cause!"

As she finished the song, Dr. Blake said to her: "Why, Ada, you little piece of unreconstructed porcelain and never-give-up-ableness, I do believe you have not realized that the civil war has been over for more than a score of years."

"Well, it depends upon the standpoint from which you look."

"What do you mean? You will have to explain that chunk of wisdom."

"I mean that, though the actual fighting is over, the principle that brought on the fighting still lives. You know some wise somebody has said the sword may establish a fact, but it cannot alter a principle."

"But, my dear girl, the Confederacy was thoroughly subjugated and surrendered at discretion. Is that not so?"

"Oh, yes, I admit that the men of the Confederacy, during the first three years of the war, wore themselves out whipping the substitutes that you Yankees sent to the front, and at the end of the fourth year they were forced to surrender to numbers from the West."

"What a viperous little vixen you are! A woman's tongue is sharper than the sword, and I surrender. But what of the principle? You say it still lives, and I suppose we find its exponents in the strikes that now and then paralyze the country."

"You have heard that truth crushed to earth will rise again, and, as you say, the principle lingers in the strike. There it may be carried to excess and degenerate into license, but the same principle underlies it. It is a struggle against trusts and monopolies—in a word, against centralized power as opposed to individual rights. The men of the Confederacy believed that the States had reserved certain powers, or rights, when the government was founded; or as we would now express it, they believed in home rule, and they regarded these powers, or rights, as essential to the preservation of the Republic. The North claimed that these powers, or rights, were centralized in the General Government—war was the result; upon the ruins of the Confederacy a strong government has arisen, and we now have an empire masquerading as a republic. The history of Rome is repeating itself. The millionaires are growing insolent in their sway. Already the government is put to auction every four years in the election of our Chief Magistrate. There will come a clash between the classes—a Cæsar will arise, and then—the deluge."

"I admit the principles of the Confederacy live in Ada Stuart."

"Ah, yes, and in many another heart, and they will continue to live on forever, for they have their root in human nature. You may crush them out of sight for a time, but they will sprout again. Galileo said the world moved. He was forced to recant, but he muttered to himself, as he rose from his knees, it moves for all of that."

As Hamilton, in company with Kate, turned away, he remarked, "She is intensely in earnest."

"Yes, the Confederacy and its leaders is the one subject upon which she goes wild; but I can appreciate her feelings, for more than one of her people perished in the land of Dixie."

"There is some truth in what she says, but it must be taken *cum grano salis*. Some of the military leaders of the Confederacy were truly great men. The campaigns of Lee are the study of Europe, and Jackson in the Valley is the rival of Napoleon in Italy. The day is coming, if it has not already come, when we will willingly claim these men for our countrymen, for they are our countrymen, though battling in a mistaken cause. The fact that we outnumbered them; that it took a billion of money and a struggle of four years before we could triumph over them; that we met with many and terrible reverses, proves one of two things—either that these men were military giants, or that the leaders we sent to meet them were military pigmies. I know it is difficult to give a just measure of praise to the men who made us suffer, but if our people would only think they would

know that, in belitting these men, they are engaged in the hurtful business of throwing boomerangs."

"*Poeta nascitur non fit;* but isn't it equally true, doctor, in the military?"

"I think so. We have our schools where general rules are mastered, but nobody supposes for a moment that Napoleon acquired his all-conquering skill from what was taught him at Brienne. To make a great military chieftain there must be an intuition that points the opportunity and an inspiration that suggests the ways and means, and neither can be acquired in schools from books. As we have mentioned Jackson, I will tell you something that I heard of him, and whether true or not it illustrates my idea. At the battle of Fredericksburg, Burnside and his army were driven back from Marye's Heights, and as the night closed in the Federal army found itself cooped up in the little town. It is said that Jackson went to Lee and assured him that the Federals were utterly demoralized and begged that a heavy attack might be made; that the Federal army would either be captured or would be rolled into the river. Jackson wanted to hurl the whole Confederate army, as one man, upon the enemy, and urged this course. Lee hesitated and finally refused, believing that the Federals would renew the attack the next morning. Jackson replied, 'By morning they will be on the other side of the river.' His intuition was right. It is fortunate for the world that it takes hundreds of years to mould a great military chieftain—Alexander—Cæsar—Napoleon."

"May not the same be said of great poets?—Homer—Virgil—Milton. But I want to hear about your mother? You mentioned her to-night and I want to hear about her."

"Thank you! You have given me a theme of never-failing pleasure. She was a very handsome woman, above the average size, but graceful, and possessed of rare culture and attainments. I was her only child, and to me she was a loving mother, a joyous companion and a diligent instructress. Before going to bed at night she never failed to kneel with me, and with one arm thrown around me ask God's guidance, protection and benediction upon her child. She died suddenly—cut off in the full bloom of her usefulness and her womanhood, and when I was but ten years old. But she lived long enough to imprint herself upon my heart forever, and her teachings are there ever welling into view and watering conscience. I have wandered far, very far, from the paths in which she would have me walk, but after my wildest dissipations—to hear of which would make you sick at heart—her influences have never failed to gather around me and recall me, if not to full duty, at least to honorable manhood."

When he ceased speaking there was a tremor in his voice. They stood a minute in soothing silence. Then in perfect cadence and softened tone he repeated the lines of the poet:

"'She clasped my hands and smiled,
Ah! then I was a child—
I knew not harm—
My mother's arm
Was flung around me; and I felt
That when I knelt
To listen to my mother's prayer,
God was with mother there.

"'Yea! God is sweet!
She told me so;
She never told me wrong;
And through my years of woe
Her whispers soft, and sad, and low,
And sweet as Angel's song
Have floated like a dream.'"

CHAPTER IX

It was several weeks after the party at Judge Somers', when we find Dalzell calling at Hamilton's office. In the meantime they had become fast friends. When his name was reported, Hamilton called out from an inner room, "Come in here, Dalzell."

Dalzell went in and found him engaged in his usual morning athletic exercises. As Dalzell came in, Jack said:

"I was with Jim Ross last night, and I slept later than usual this morning. I could not leave him until 2 A. M. Jim, you know, met with an accident yesterday—his horse rearing and falling back on him."

"Yes, I heard of it. Is he seriously hurt?"

"Seriously, but not fatally. He will be confined to his room for a few days. He will have leisure to recall the errors of his life and think over the many good deeds he might have done."

"The first is profitable, but I think the latter would not be very consoling to a sick man. But what are you doing here—stripped to the waist, with your skin glowing like a spread of pink?"

"I took my morning bath, and my factotum only about fifteen minutes ago finished giving me a thor-

ough rubbing with a Turkish towel. As you see, I have the gloves on, and when you came in I was engaged in punishing this bag. Take a seat and let me finish the job."

Dalzell sat down and Hamilton went to work. Dalzell was surprised at the power and rapidity of the blows, and seemed to be fascinated at the play of the immense muscles of the arms, back and around the neck, that rose and swelled under the exercise.

"Hamilton, I would as soon play with the business end of a wild mustang as to try and stand up before you. Are you good at sparring?"

"I have been thoroughly trained, and with safety I may say that I understand the manly art of self-defense."

"You are a man of peace. Why do you keep yourself in such perfect trim?"

"In the first place, to develop my muscles and keep them hard and strong. In the second place, the exercise is healthful. In addition, we never know at what moment we may be called upon for all our physical manhood."

"Well, Hamilton, the nature of my business this morning is very different from that of pugilism. I am here in the interest of the Graces and the Muses, if you have time to hear me."

"Go ahead, Dalzell; I am through with my exercise and I am all attention."

"My sister Inez came home a few days ago from New Orleans, where she had been spending several months with relations. To make merry

over the coming, my mother proposes to entertain a few friends to-morrow evening, and I have called to say you are among the chosen few, and to express my personal wish that you will make it convenient to be present—the formal invitation is en route. I believe you never met my sister?"

"No, that pleasure awaits me—until to-morrow evening."

"Our mother has a strain of Spanish blood and, as you know, she shows it, and Inez is a youthful edition of her mother. They delight to delve into the past and are fond of studying the ancestral tree. They claim that the blood of the Spanish grandee flows in their veins; and when you meet Inez if you will only converse with her in Spanish you will find yourself on the highway to her friendship and esteem. As to blood and such trifles, I have no time to devote to them. I leave all such to the women and accept their conclusions."

"It is a soft and pleasant language, and, as some one has said—it melts like kisses from a female's mouth, and sounds as if it should be writ on satin. But I am sorry to hear you speak of blood and trifles as on a parity, for I am a strong believer in heredity."

> "'What can ennoble thieves and cowards,"
> Not all the blood of all the Howards.'"

Quoted Dalzell.

"True," replied Hamilton, "but who ever heard of a Howard being either a thief or a coward? It is easy to trace family likenesses, and it is gener-

ally conceded that physical qualities are transmissible. Why not the mental and moral? The duty of the hour, and our statesmen are beginning to consider it, is to enact laws forbidding the intermarriage of criminals and weak-minded persons."

"You may be partly right," said Dalzell, "but there are certainly two sides to the question. We seldom if ever hear of the sons of our great statesmen. For illustration, take the three men generally conceded to be the giants of our country,—Webster, Clay, and Calhoun,—neither of them left a son of more than average ability. Look through the list—it is not long—and you will find that the rule holds good, with an apparent exception here and there. The history of other countries reveals the same fact. The rule, as a rule, holds good, whether we look among historians, poets, painters, military men, or elsewhere."

"You seem," said Hamilton, "to concede the question except the mental part of it. Here you have an apparent advantage, but I think your argument more plausible than convincing. You derive from the mother rather than the father. Observation supports this view, and it may safely be asserted that history confirms it when we look into the lives of our really great men and familiarize ourselves with the mothers that gave them being. I don't believe you can find in history a man who exhibited great intellectual powers whose mother before him did not rise above the average in force of character and strength of mind. But why dis-

cuss this question, for I am persuaded you believe in blood as much as I do?"

Dalzell was smiling as he said: "Well, Hamilton, you are partly right and wholly wrong. Yes, I believe in blood and that it will tell, and I am as proud of my lineage as you can possibly be of yours, which, I understand, you can trace back until it is lost in the early mists that hang around the Scottish hills. I admit that it takes three generations to make the polished gentleman. It is in social life that blood reveals itself most readily, and it is easy to detect the late-comer when we look to manners, and culture, and refinement. I have no faith, however, in your theory of mental transmission—not a particle. This country has produced no greater man than Abe Lincoln, but where is his ancestry? Shakespeare is without a rival, and Burns is the sweetest singer of them all. Grant, the hero of our Civil War, was a tanner, and Forrest, the greatest of all the cavalry leaders, was a liveryman. Ney, who lives in history as the bravest of the brave, was the son of an obscure cooper, and Murat, the son of the hostler, in the terrible cavalry charge at the battle of Eylau, rode down upon the Russian ranks three lengths in front of the best blood in all France."

"If the fact could be ascertained," Hamilton replied, "I have no doubt that each of them had a mother of unusual force of character and mental power."

"That may be so, Hamilton, but where is the

blue blood—the ancestral tree of which you have been talking?"

"That '*may be so*' of yours, Dalzell, hints a flag of truce, and we will drop the discussion. How about the entertainment? Will it be a large or a small gathering?"

"It will be small—only a few friends. A crowded room is a foe to comfort, and without comfort there can be no pleasure."

CHAPTER X

Grace Russell, in company with certain friends, had been traveling for a year or more. After wandering here and there over England and Scotland, she had toured the continent and had visited the land of the Nile. Kate, as the reader knows, had spent several months in California. As a consequence, the correspondence between these two friends had almost ceased. It was a day or two after Kate had entertained that she was pleasantly surprised by receiving a letter from Grace, who had returned from her trip abroad. There were some matters in this letter of interest to Kate.

"Dear Kate:

"I wrote you last from Florence. After casting anchor at home, getting thoroughly rested and coming to my normal self, among other questions, I asked about 'my doctor,' as I call him—only I named him Dr. Hamilton. You can't guess my surprise, when his friend, Dr. Livingstone, told me he had left this city and is now living in your town. Dr. L. pretended to know very little about the whys and wherefores of his leaving. In fact, he seemed to be densely ignorant generally, but he believed he was engaged in the practice of his profession. Dr. L.'s pretended ignorance only sharp-

ened my curiosity, and I asked others who knew less but told more. I found the recent arrivals, who had been so fortunate as to buy their way into society, claimed to be fully posted. You know they are a cheap lot and worship at the shrine of Madame Grundy. Faugh! I detest their airs and the smell of the hay field that hangs around and about them. These new-borns, unfortunately for society, are not still-borns, and they prefer a dish of gossip to the nectar of the gods. From some of this set I learn that Dr. Hamilton went away on account of his poverty, not being able longer to hold his position in society. These slander-ducts tell fearful tales about how he squandered his fortune in wild dissipation and nameless immoralities; when, for several years, he lived abroad. I listened to as little of this stuff as I could to be rationally polite and gain the information that I desired. I assure you I was very careful to say nothing myself, for a dog that will fetch will carry. But I didn't believe a word of it, for I know Dr. Hamilton to be a gentleman 'from away back.' You must excuse the slang, Katy, for it is most conveniently expressive and supplies beautifully the place of certain expletives which men are fond of using when they wish to be very emphatic. It may be true that he has been unfortunate and has lost his money, but if he didn't have enough left to buy a garment like to the one Adam used just after joining mother Eve in a dish of fruit, he would still be greatly superior to these mongrels who feed on slander and fatten on evil speaking.

"I don't know why I have written you all this, only it does make me indignant to see the carrion crows feeding on the fallen eagle. Now, Katy dear, Dr. Hamilton is in your town and you may meet him, and if you do, I want you to be kind to him. Don't let any rumors that may have followed him influence you against him, for I assure you he is a gentleman. He has always lived and moved in the best society both at home and abroad—it is his native element—and I believe you will like him when you meet him. As many young men do, I suppose he may have sowed some wild oats in his younger days. Young men of fortune and of spirit are apt to engage, more or less, in that kind of business. But the great majority of them soon get through with their oat sowing and, entering on the duties of life, they are the men who generally succeed. Of course, I am not speaking from my own observation and experience, but from what I have heard my elders say about men whom I know to be most successful. The fact is, Katy, while we cannot openly admit it, the girls like a man who has a flavor of wickedness about him—just a hint of it—you know. It is human nature, and we all have more or less of that article in us. Now I have always thought your goody-goody men, who always carry through tickets in their vest pockets, better fitted for the skies than for this wicked world. We hear of these goody-goodies from papa and mama, you know, and they will do to *talk about,* but when you try to *talk with them* you find them without

flavor. In fact, some of them are so very, *very good* that they are really very, *very* dull.

"Katy, coming over, I made the acquaintance of a Mr. Ralph Carson. He had been touring for months and had seen many of the same places and sights that I had seen, so we were at no loss for topics to talk about. Chit-chatting with him, I found he was from Denver, and I asked him if he knew a hoyden of that city whose name is Kate Somers. He said he did, and thereafter, with you as a pedestal, we found ourselves upon a pleasant footing. He is handsome, and just to look at he is as fine a specimen of the man animal as I ever saw. At first I thought I liked him, for it is a girl's weakness to fancy a handsome man, but subsequent interviews wore the fancy away. He carries too much polish. So much so that I felt that he was artificial rather than natural, and I don't like veneered furniture, much less a veneered man. Then, too, he was given to fault-finding, and he was too fond of picking our ship acquaintances in pieces. My experience teaches me that such a man is a great admirer of himself and thoroughly selfish—a bad combination for family pleasantries and smoothing out the wrinkles of domestic cares. He stopped over in the city. He called last evening to bid me good-bye, and today I suppose he is on his way to Denver. But he was not sufficiently artificial to conceal one thing from me—his fondness for you. He never got tired of talking about you, and it mattered not what we might discuss or

talk about, before we could separate there was always something about you.

"Men are funny animals. They imagine themselves very wise, commiserate the women weaklings and waste a good deal of time talking about the vine clinging round the sturdy oak and other like nonsense. Give us equal advantages and I believe we could make them hustle for the goal. In matters of the heart we are far away and ahead of them. Let a man become interested in a girl and he must hang around and about and we can read him from afar. He must ask questions about her, he must be looking at her, and all the time he is so silly as to think he is not betraying himself. He is delightfully transparent. He imagines his ways are the ways of wisdom, and he thinks himself most diplomatically cunning in all his conversations and questions, but he is only amusing, and with our perception and intuition we read him like a book.

"Whenever you hear a woman laughing, talking, and asking questions about a man you may be sure that man has not entered the outer court of her heart—she is only flirting and romancing. But let her become interested and she ceases to talk—she closes like a clam. In company she can spend her time talking with the other fellow in such a pleasant, sprightly and animated manner as to set all the men present off on the wrong track and drive her sweetheart crazy—if he, too, is interested. All the while she will keep one corner of

her eye on him, but I defy the world to catch her at it.

"But, Katy, I am trying your patience, for you know more about such matters than I do, and we have often jollied and laughed over them together. I thought, however, I would let you know I am still studying in the school of art. When you come to see me I will take my finishing lessons, for the perfection of art is to conceal art—and there, my dear Katy, you are perfect. Now, Katy, you must not mind my nonsense, and we will have a good time and some fun when we meet, for I know we have both had some funny experiences that will bear telling.

"By by, till we meet.

"GRACE."

CHAPTER XI

It was a beautiful night and the yellow moon was just putting on her silvery toilet as Hamilton reached the Dalzell mansion. He was received by his friend, who, turning to a lady standing by him, said:

"Inez, my sister, this is my friend, Dr. Hamilton, of whom you have heard me speak."

"Since my return home my brother, Albert, has spoken of you so often and so pleasantly, Doctor, that I almost feel that we are not strangers."

"A bad beginning, I have heard, makes a good ending. Did he tell you that we almost quarreled at our first meeting, and but for his manhood and magnanimity we would be foes to-day instead of being friends?"

With a smile lighting up her face, she answered, "Oh, yes, he told me all about that meeting; only he was so impressed with your manly manhood that he forgot to tell me anything about his own, except that he was a very naughty boy on that occasion."

Hamilton saw that she was simply but faultlessly dressed in rich material, and her manners were as natural and unassuming as those of a child. She had great, mischief-brewing black eyes that looked

straight into his. Her Spanish blood showed in the faint orange tint of her complexion, and the dimples when she smiled were lurking places for playful Cupids. Her figure was a model, her posture gracefully erect, and her glorious suit of black hair challenged comparison. She was without ornament except a magnificent diamond at her throat that broke the light like a star. He instinctively felt that she was a charming and magnetic girl, rejoicing in her young womanhood and scattering sunshine wherever she went. He realized all this in the brief interval of their exchange of words, when Dalzell said, "Inez, when Dr. Hamilton is ready, conduct him to the drawing-room."

As they entered, Hamilton saw Kate and a strange gentleman standing near the center of the room engaged in a conversation which they both seemed to enjoy. Without a glance of recognition he passed on with Inez to her mother, and while exchanging greetings he shifted his position so as to get a good look at the stranger. He saw that he was handsome, of athletic build, modish in his make-up and of easy carriage. He was talking with animation, and gesticulating frequently and gracefully in a way to display a pair of shapely hands that a woman might envy. But the rather thin upper lip, the want of breadth between the eyes, the almost meeting of the eyebrows and the furtive restlessness of the brilliant brown eyes did not impress Hamilton favorably. He was engaged in an exchange of pleasantries with Inez and her

mother while making these observations, but Inez, catching the now and then direction of his eyes, remarked, "The gentleman talking with Kate is Mr. Ralph Carson.'

"And who is Mr. Ralph Carson?" was Hamilton's questioning reply.

"I thought perhaps you had met him. He belongs to the city and to our set, but he has been absent for more than a year, traveling here and there and elsewhere beyond the waters. He only returned a few days ago. He is a great admirer of Kate, and the girls whisper among themselves that he would like to be more than a friend to her."

"And what does Miss Kate say? Does she believe in the doctrine advocated by Mr. Blaine?"

"You will have to be more explicit, Doctor. Mr. Blaine was a man of ability, and during a long political career he must have advocated more than one doctrine."

"True; I refer to his doctrine of reciprocity."

His eyes were resting upon Kate as he spoke. Inez not answering immediately, he turned to find her looking intently at him and, smiling, she said: "I may suspect, but I never betray. You must ask Kate."

Hamilton started in surprise, and there was something of hauteur in his manner as he replied: "Your language is equivocal. Will Miss Dalzell tell me what she suspects and whom she suspects?"

"Dr. Hamilton must not take exception to what was intended as a mere pleasantry."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Dalzell, if by word or

look I forgot myself. You have the advantage of me."

"On the contrary, from what Albert has told me about you, I hope you have the advantage." She was still smiling good humoredly, and Hamilton, falling into her vein, threw up his hands, saying:

"Be merciful! Your badinage and your play upon words are all conquering; but you forget that Miss Somers and I are acquaintances of but a few weeks."

Inez looked archly at him and said: "I didn't know that either time or age had anything to do with such matters. Possibly she knows more about you than you think she does. I was at Vassar with Kate—a year behind her—and I know that she and Grace Russell were class-mates and room-mates, and that letters passing between them are filled with confidences. I have reason to believe that you have met Grace, as she moves in the best society that the city of New York affords, and that she may have mentioned you in her letters to Kate. This, however, is all conjecture. Granting that you have met her, it may be that Grace has never given you a thought and, therefore, could not have made you the subject of an epistle. But, jesting aside, as hostess I have monopolized you too long. I see Kate and Mr. Carson looking this way, and, having made friends, I will take you to them."

When Inez presented Hamilton, Carson said: "I have heard of Dr. Hamilton at home and abroad, and it is a pleasure to meet him."

After exchanging a few words, Carson turned to

Inez and Hamilton to Kate, who said: "The night I met you at the theater and invited you to meet some friends, you referred to a tradition which I have been trying to find, but I have failed. You must tell me about it, as you seemed to think it apropos to something I had said."

"You remember, as we were about to separate, you said you had arranged to entertain a few friends and that your list was full, but, if I would come, you would try and make room for me."

"Yes, I remember that I made some such remark."

"I asked if you remembered the tradition of the Eastern philosopher."

"And I answered that I had never so much as heard of it, and you promised to tell me about it."

"And so I will, but as we had met several times since and you had not referred to it, I took it for granted that you had either forgotten my promise or did not care to hear the tradition."

"Uncle Gus could tell you that I always exhaust myself before I call for help. I have tried and I have failed, and now I call to you for help."

"You are right. A man who is not willing to help himself is not worth helping. Self-reliance is the great essential to success. I can't recall just at this moment where I met with the tradition, but it comes from the Orient. It tells us that somewhere in that dreamland, in the long ago, a celebrated school of philosophy was established. One of the rules governing the school limited the number of members to twenty-four. A philosopher, distin-

guished for his learning and ability and with whose reputation the school was familiar, coming from abroad and ignorant of the rule, applied for membership. The school was not only willing, but desirous of receiving him. The rule, however, would not permit. The hour was fixed for the philosopher to appear and receive the answer to his application. The president was instructed to make the answer as delicate as possible. At the appointed time the applicant for membership entered the school and, advancing to the desk, the president, amid profound silence, presented him with a goblet crowned with water. Comprehending at a glance the signification, the philosopher was retiring in confusion, when he chanced to espy the petal of a rose lying on the floor. Picking it up, he again advanced to the desk of the president, and gently placing the petal on the surface without disturbing the contents of the goblet, he demonstrated that, though full, it would hold more. The school was delighted; the rule was suspended, and the philosopher was admitted."

"Thank you," said Kate. "I have enjoyed your tradition very much and, as my father would say in his legal way, I think it was pertinent at the time you used it. But, leaving the traditions of the past for the pleasures of the present, I saw you talking with Inez and I hope you like her."

"She was kindly pleasant and impressed me so favorably that I would like very much to have her for a friend."

"She is passionately fond of her brother, and

believes the world revolves within the compass of his head. Much depends on him, as I suppose you use the word in the Byronic sense?"

"The remark to which you refer was unfortunate. When I make the admission I trust you will forgive me, unless you want to quarrel with me."

"I must forgive, for I have no desire to see again the steely glint that gathered in your eye when on the verge of a quarrel with Mr. Dalzell. But I am glad you are pleased with Inez, because I am very fond of her. Upon further acquaintance, I know that you will appreciate her as an amiable, big-hearted, brainy girl, and you will find her brilliant when the occasion warrants. She led her college class without a seeming effort, and brought home with her the love of all her class-mates."

"She told me that she was at Vassar. Also, that you are a graduate of that college."

"I didn't suspect that you and Inez had reached the gossiping stage. What further information did she give you?"

"She told me that you and my friend, Grace Russell of New York City, were class-mates and room-mates. Why did you not tell me?"

"Why did you not tell me that you and Grace are friends?"

"For the simple reason that I was not aware that you had met her."

"Does it not occur to you that the same simple reason might furnish a full answer to your question?"

"Having been your room-mate for several years,

I take it for granted that you are still friends and that you correspond with each other?"

"Yes, we are confidential friends and our confidences go with our letters. But what of that?"

"As she and I are friends, I thought perhaps in some of her letters she might have mentioned me—knowing, as she does, that I am in Denver."

"Dr. Hamilton forgets himself in his anxiety to learn what impression he has made upon a certain young lady, and he commits an indiscretion when he asks the betrayal of the secrets that her letters may contain. I respectfully recommend you to headquarters."

Kate was determined to put a stop to his questions, and she spoke in a cool, measured tone, and in a manner indicative of injured feelings. Hamilton was astounded, but he managed to ejaculate:

"You wring my words and torture me beyond expression! Nothing was further from my thoughts than the construction you place upon my language."

"Dr. Hamilton, if I have wronged you I am very sorry. Your manner convinces me that I have done you a great wrong. I ought to have known, and I did know, that you are incapable of the charge that I insinuated, and I beg pardon."

"Forgive you! Yes, with all my heart! And now that I come to think of it, I must admit that I pushed my questions dangerously near the line of impertinence and deserved the rebuke you administered. The hope that a kind word spoken in my behalf might strengthen me in your estimation can form my only excuse."

There was a flash of intelligence in Kate's eye as she replied:

"Your effort is kind, but a gallant remark cannot make me forget my rankling words, and, as you say, now that I think of it, I know you did not deserve the rebuke I gave you, and that I was not only rude, but I was unladylike."

"True, you misconstrued my meaning, but I cannot say that my words were not susceptible of the construction you placed upon them; and, therefore, you have committed no offense calling for forgiveness. But," continued Hamilton, smiling, "the affair has been amicably adjusted, the duello has been avoided, honor has been preserved without the shedding of blood, and we are again friends. Now, tell me about Miss Grace."

"Well, she is a whole-souled girl and, judging from her letters, she is whole-hearted, which, perhaps, is of more interest to you. You seem to have forgotten that she left New York more than a year ago for a European trip, which, if I am not mistaken, was before you left the city, or about the same time. So you see that she was not likely to know that you had made your home in Denver during her absence. I have no doubt she knows by this time, as a letter from her a few days ago informs me of her return."

"You are right. I had forgotten that she went away on her trip about the time I left New York, and now I see how stupid I have been. She was certainly whole-hearted when I parted with her, and she is not the girl to sell herself or to be wooed

and won by a title. I have no doubt that she returned heart-whole, and I think that man fortunate who may be able to ensconce himself within her affections."

"I am glad that you appreciate her. Grace is worthy of all you say and more. But, look. As usual Ada and Uncle Gus are having an amicable battle. She seems to be attacking him with all her Southern chivalry, while he is shaking with laughter and beckoning us to come and enjoy the fun. Suppose we join them, and we'll talk of Grace another time. What say you?"

Joining the group around the combatants, Hamilton asked: "What's the fun? Let us join in it—the more the merrier—you know."

"I was just telling Dr. Blake that he is nothing but an old fossil and belongs to the granite period," answered Ada. "Whenever a man gets to that time of life that he can go on and on repeating stale anecdotes and hoary jokes, he cannot be entertaining to anybody but an archæologist. He is a spectre of the past, a mere reminiscence."

"What have you been doing, Uncle Gus, to bring on an eruption so violent?"

"You mean an explosion, Kate! You mean an explosion! What have I been doing? Nothing at all. I merely poked Ada with the point of an anecdote after the fashion of the little boy that stirs up the lion in his cage with a long stick, and—gee—whiz!—how she made the windows rattle with her roaring! Sue and Ada, you know, are always happy in their topics for festal occasions.

Their sense of propriety has so surprised me that I am satisfied they meet in consultation before time and map out the conversational campaign. Ada and Sue tell me that a set of sinless sinners, a lot of wing-sprouting, faith-curing, perfectionist and sanctimonious sanctificationists have come to town to propagate their doctrines, and to inform the world in general, and professing Christians in particular, that all humanity, themselves excepted, is on the highway to a certain hot country said to be paved with good intentions. They claim to be filled with the spirit—remaining on earth is a great trial to them; they want to die and leave this sin-cursed world. Well, Ada pretends to agree with them, and pretends, further, that there are people who are really so good that they wish to die. At this point I asked her if she had heard what Pat Maloney, when dying, said to Father Hughes. She said she had not, and I told her it was suggestive and might be worth considering. Father Hughes is fond of a joke and we are good friends, so when we meet we frequently fill in the time by swapping our latest. Pat's physicians had told him that he could not live. Pat, being a good Catholic, sent for Father Hughes, that he might confess and receive the last rites of his church. He found Pat much excited at the thought of dying, and tried to console him without success. Pat would not be comforted, and continued to bemoan and bewail his fate. Finally, the priest said, 'Pat, as a good Catholic, you ought not to be afraid to meet your God.'

" 'Faith, your Riverence, it's not that, it's not that; it's the tother fellow that Oim 'fraid ov meeting.'

"This is the little anecdote that I told in all innocence, but Ada seems to think that I was covertly suggesting her spiritual condition, and immediately went off into spasms of jimjams."

"Doctor," remarked Sue Maxwell, "I suspect you of drawing a long bow. Who is Father Hughes? I never heard of him here or elsewhere."

"Father Hughes! Why, he is a Catholic priest, of course. That you have never met him or heard of him only goes to prove that your acquaintance is limited and that you are not well informed as to our spiritual teachers. I am surprised at your want of information in religious matters."

"Doctor," added Ada, "I believe Sue is right, and my opinion is that you cannot find anybody that ever heard of Father Hughes. But tell us of Pat Maloney? Who is Pat Maloney, and what of him?"

"Never heard of Pat Maloney? You surprise me! It is a very common Irish name. As to the 'what' part of your question,—there's the rub,—it was troubling Pat very much the last I heard of him."

"It is an old thing anyhow," asserted Ada, "and I believe I have read it somewhere, and you needn't be laughing and trying to palm off on us your spurious coin. Like most of your would-be funny things, I supose you found it in *Puck,* or *Judge,* or *Truth.*"

"It is the truth that hurts, Ada, as your present feelings testify. By the way, were you giving us a list of your favorite periodicals?"

"Oh," put in Kate, "let the hoary-headed old thing go, for after all is said for it that can be said, it is not so much of a joke that we need discuss or dispute about it."

"Kate, my child, the companion of my younger days, in whom I trusted and with whom I have tasted salt, who would or could have thought it of you! *Et tu, Brute!* Here, take my stylus and hand me my toga, that I may sink down to death at Ada's feet!"

While they were all laughing at the put-on-woe-begone expression on the doctor's face, Dalzell remarked:

"Doctor, you speak of these faith-curing, sanctified people as if you knew something about them. From the way you speak of them, I take it for granted that you have met with them."

"I have met the creatures. We have an influx of this kind, in one form or another, about every score of years. Like most other eruptions, it comes unexpectedly and soon fades away."

"I thought it was something new. Tell us what you think of it."

"No, it is an old, intermittent disease that has afflicted a certain class of people for many years, and the amusing part of the trouble is, that every time the eruption breaks out afresh the afflicted rave and rant and claim to be filled with the spirit and a new revelation from heaven. I made up my

mind long ago about that crowd of theological tramps, and I have ceased to notice them or to think about them. It is a waste of time."

"But, Doctor, these people seem devoted to their teachings, and some of them must be honest. From what I hear, they do accomplish some good. If they do, they certainly do not merit wholesale denunciation."

"Well, it is to be hoped that they do accomplish some good, for I feel certain that they do a great deal of harm. Some of them may be honest in their belief, but that is no proof that they are not doing harm. Who questions the honesty of Paul when he stood by and held the garments of those who stoned Stephen? Or who questions his convictions when he set out for Damascus? Yet it was on the journey to that city that he found he was guilty of a great wrong. Honesty of purpose is no excuse for wrong-doing. The objection that I have to these sanctified nomads is, they are without any form of church government. They are wholly irresponsible and are not even a church unto themselves. They wander here and there, pitch their tents in anybody's pasture grounds and claim the right to feed at will. Again, they are church disorganizers. Wherever they go, if the pastors of the several churches fail to join in the pow-wow and bray with them, they are ridiculed, sneered at, and often denounced as strangers to grace and ignorant of the plan of salvation. In this manner, as far as these nomads have influence, these worthy pastors are brought into disrepute

and their influence over their congregations weakened."

"But, Uncle Gus, you have left off a part of your sermon."

"To what part do you refer, Kate?"

"To the faith-curing part. What of that?"

"I believe in faith and prayer as much as any man," said Dr. Blake, "if I don't run all the prayer-meetings in this city. I also believe in common sense, and if you will analyze what we call religion you will find the root of its every vital principle imbedded in common sense. These people ask us to disregard the dictates of reason and to turn our backs upon the garnered experiences of the ages. I feel assured that a good case of cramp colic can easily finish up the bravest of these all-faith fellows. I have some respect for the theory of the Christian Scientist, because it has a modicum of sense in it. Some of our troubles are purely imaginary, while others are of the nervous order; and, the brain being the seat of the nervous system, if you can get a man to honestly believe—there's the rub—that he is not afflicted, the first is dispelled and the other is relieved. Like that of perpetual motion, the theory is good if you can only get it to work. The regulars sometimes act upon this theory when we administer the bread pill, or some simple remedy, and glowingly describe the happy effect. Of course it is the most arrant nonsense when you come to pneumonia, kidney trouble, fever, appendicitis, meningitis, snake bites, and other afflictions and inflictions."

Pretending not to have noticed up to this time, he exclaimed, "Bless my life, Ada, what has become of my audience?"

"Inez and Albert, as she calls him, feeling it to be their duty to resist the influence of your melodious voice, went away and are now busy in their efforts to entertain and make the evening a success. Mr. Carson is much fonder of talking to Kate than he is of listening to you, and I saw them wandering off in the direction of the conservatory. Dr. Hamilton followed suit with Sue, and they have gone—I don't know where."

Bowing to her, he said: "And here I have been for I don't know how long, wasting my time and lore on the wall flower and the last rose of summer. I must be as eloquent as Burke, who could always empty the house when he rose to speak, and, like Burke, I must leave my vindication and my fame to the reading public and to posterity. But, Ada, when in Rome we must do as Rome does; so take my arm and we will wander off to some hidden niche of Cupid's planning. I am a little out of practice, but I will do my best; and if you will only give me a few smiles of encouragement and help me to a word now and then, we will—"

"Come on, Doctor, come on, and don't keep me standing here listening to what you are going to do, but come on and do it. Let us hasten to that much-desired niche and enjoy the beatific moment. Bless your heart, I had rather marry you than—"

"Je-ru-sa-lem, Ada, name ever dear to me!

Hold till I can get my breath! I don't want you to do all the courting, and if you persist I must insist upon my right to name the happy day." Laughing, they disappeared in the direction of the refreshment room.

CHAPTER XII

For several days Hamilton was busy with his professional duties, but, a leisure evening coming, he concluded that he would spend it at the Somers residence. When he called he asked if Kate was at home, and was ushered into the parlor where he met her. There was something in the air that caused him to remark in a tone of inquiry:

"I fear my call is not opportune—you are expecting some person and I had no appointment?"

"I am glad to see you, however, and I am sorry to say that I have an appointment for the evening with Mr. Carson."

Hamilton, rising, said: "It may be, then, that you have some preparations to make, and I will not detain you."

"You are mistaken. When I am advised of the coming, as I am in this instance, I always make my preparations before time, rather than let my caller bore himself with waiting. If you have to take the medicine, the sooner you take it the better. So be seated and we will chit-chat until Mr. Carson comes."

"How is it that you speak of your friend's call and medicine in the same breath?"

"Oh, I only said that by way of illustration. But,

then, you know that some medicines have a very happy effect and are very pleasant to the taste. I haven't seen you for several days, so tell me what you have been doing with yourself."

"Nothing that would interest the unprofessional —merely visiting the sick, feeling the pulse, examining the stuck-out tongue, looking wise, and writing prescriptions."

"Well, I am sorry for you, and I will try and change the current of your thoughts. I wrote Grace to-day, told her that I had met you and asked her to pay me a visit. Now what have you to say?"

"I hope she will come, and if she does I shall turn over my work to Dr. Blake, take a vacation and help you entertain her. We will have theater-going, opera-going, parties, entertainments, picnics, pastimes, and show her some scenery that surpasses anything she saw in Europe."

"Oh, I never doubted that you would help me entertain her," said Kate in a teasing tone, "and it is delightful to see how even the hope of her coming enthuses you. But I notice that you haven't intimated that you would like to know what I said about you in the letter of invitation."

"Please don't try to prod me with my mistakes, for they are many; the effort will keep you very busy for a long, long time, and I will lose the chit-chat that you suggested. But suppose I had intimated?"

"It will be time enough to answer when the intimation comes."

"You ought not to tempt me, for the temptation is very strong when perhaps it reaches into the opinion of one whom I admire and esteem."

There was a quick glance in Kate's eye as she laughingly said: "While you claim, in a large measure, to have withdrawn from society, I see, Doctor, that you have not forgotten its gallantries."

Hamilton was beginning to protest, when Mr. Carson was announced. Entering, Carson was visibly surprised to find Hamilton, to whom he made a distant and over-polished bow. There was some general conversation for a few minutes, when Hamilton, knowing it was quite unnecessary to make excuse, rose and bid them good-night. As he was leaving, Dr. Blake, sitting on the veranda with Judge Somers, called to him and asked him to join them. As he approached, Dr. Blake said:

"Here, Hamilton, sit down and have a cigar with us. These cigars are good, which goes to prove that they are smuggled goods. I don't know where or how Dick gets hold of them, whether by way of a bribe or by way of complicity. It was the knowing Talleyrand, I believe, who said every man has his price, and if you want to find the way to Dick's heart give him a good cigar. Put on your thinking-cap, if you are capable of doing it, as I want your professional opinion on a matter that Dick and I have been talking about. But why were you leaving so soon?"

"For the reason that, under certain circumstances, two make company and three make a rout, as Judge Somers can inform you. But you didn't

stop me for this information—so state your case and I will see if I can diagnose it."

"Have you heard that Tom Briggs committed suicide?"

"No. When did that happen?"

"This afternoon; but—judging from a letter he left behind—it didn't happen—it was a calmly premeditated act. He said he was tired of living—left good-bye to all his friends and told them where he wanted to be buried. He seemed to be perfectly sane, and Dick and I have been talking over the question as to whether or not a sane man ever commits suicide. What is your opinion?"

"In my opinion a desire to live is a part of human nature wisely given, and I do not believe any sane man ever committed suicide. Human nature shrinks back from death, and it must have a twist from the normal state before there can be any desire for the grave. The man may, in a general way, talk right and act right, but there must be a screw loose somewhere in his mental machinery. Like a wheel with a cog awry, the running is perfect until you come to the loose cog, and then comes the shock and possibly the break down."

"Well, it seems I can't get up a discussion with this 'me too' party, so we will change from death unto life. Have you seen in to-day's paper what Judge Clay said about the Inter-State laws? He is only a District Judge, but his opinion struck me as not only sensible, but conclusive of the question."

They both answered in the negative, and the

doctor continued: "You remember, Hamilton, what I said on the subject the first night you were here and deluged the place with water?"

Hamilton laughed. "Yes, I remember that you held State laws in contempt; that prohibition or dispensary was a matter of indifference to you; that by means of the Inter-State law you could order in and get all the whiskey you wanted—much or little."

"Well, Judge Clay agrees with me in a deliverance from the bench abounding in good sense and some law. He ought to be on the Supreme Bench. I wonder if he heard of the views I expressed that night? Dick, you and he are cheek by jowl—did you tell him?"

"We are the people and wisdom will die with us, says Gus Blake. He is the only man in all my acquaintance that can fully appreciate and fondly appropriate the imperious assertion of Louis of France—'I am the State.' Oh, no, we never mention you and—your views; we don't know that you really have any views."

Dr. Blake laughed heartily, and, looking at Hamilton, he asked: "Did you ever hear about Dick's candidacy for the district judgeship some ten or twelve years ago? No? Well, I must tell you. All in all, I don't know that I ever enjoyed the outcome of anything so much in all my life. I had to hide, however, and do my laughing to myself. I didn't care to let Dick see me, but I had more fun—"

"Pshaw!" interrupted Judge Somers. "Go on

with your fabrication. I suppose you would have Dr. Hamilton believe that I do not properly value Judge Clay's opinion because we are, or rather were, in opposition to each other—whereas, we have been all the time on the most pleasant footing."

Dr. Blake was intensely amused, and his mirth was so contagious that Hamilton, against his will, was forced to join in the laugh.

"Dick, you have often impressed me with your thorough scholarship by the selection of words that convey not only the true meaning, but even the most delicate shades of meaning. Footing is the word of all words to express the true status. In the race for the district judgeship Clay outfooted you, and in the race for the supreme judgeship you outfooted him; and each, from his own point of view, stands upon a victory and has a pleasant footing."

"But," said the judge, "Clay didn't beat me for the district judgeship. I withdrew from the race and he was elected without opposition."

"Well, Dick, I never was good at drawing nice distinctions, and I must say, to a man up a tree watching the race, it looked very much as if you were beaten. Two men, we will call them C and S, go on the course for a race—say of one hundred yards; at the ninetieth yard, C being in front, S stops and leaves the track. It looks to me as if C had won the race and that S had been beaten. You may be right in your distinctions, but—"

"Oh, well, Gus, have it your way, but do go on

and finish with your building material. You are as garrulous as an old hysterical woman."

As soon as Dr. Blake could get his breath for laughing, he continued:

"You see, Hamilton, it was this way. Clay was the elder man; he was the incumbent, but the term of office for which he had been elected was about to expire and he was a candidate for re-election. Dick was just reaching into the full strength of his manhood; his fortune in a large measure was still before him; his practice had just burst into full flower, and it never occurred to me for a moment that he would give up a twenty-five thousand dollar practice per year for the niggardly salary and the doubtful dignity of a district judge. My surprise, then, was without bounds when he told me he was thinking of contesting with Judge Clay for the district judgeship. I exerted myself to dissuade him, but in vain. It is only the fool that continues to argue with a man who has made up his mind. Whistling jigs to a tombstone in a cemetery and expecting it to dance is wisdom in comparison. He talked to me about the dignity of the position; about its being a stepping-stone; that it was in the line of promotion; that he had his eye on something away and beyond and higher. So I let him alone and listened in silence to his illusions and delusions. His friends, he told me, were clamorous for him to enter the race; they had planned the campaign to win; the field had been thoroughly examined, and all he had to do was to accept and be sworn into office. He was astounded at his pop-

ularity and amazed to find his ability and legal learning were so well known. Of course Clay would be a candidate for re-election, but his friends assured him that Clay was a mere pigmy without ability and without legal lore—practically out of the race if he would only consent to take the place. He had maturely considered the matter in its every aspect and had hesitated to accept the proffered offer, but his friends had assured him again and again that he would be an ornament to the bench—that the State was in imperative need of his services, and did not see how he could refuse the call of his many friends. It was no doubt the appeal to his patriotism that decided Dick to accept the office. So with Horatian courage, and murmuring to himself *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori,* Dick went to the rescue of the State. Horace, you know, ran away from the battlefield—withdrew, I suppose, is now the proper word. Well, for a time everything was lovely. The hotel lobbies were filled with his friends; he met them everywhere upon the streets; he ran against them turning the corners; he was having a gala time and a walk-over. But suddenly he made a discovery—he had the friends, but the other fellow had the votes. He didn't admit this at first, but it was easy to see that something had gone wrong with him. He began to talk about the wear and tear of the campaign — he was weary and tired and wanted to rest. The labor and expense and exposure were much greater than he had anticipated —his health was being impaired and he had fears

that he would not be able to hold out to the finish. If he were elected district judge he would be absent from home a great deal and his private affairs were claiming his attention every day. Then, there was Kate, his only child, he ought to be at home looking after her education and her associations. In fact, after seriously considering the matter, he had come to the conclusion that the office of district judge was not much of an office after all. He might be of benefit, but his home duties would not permit him to go around and about—to their neglect. These claims were paramount, and he could not be expected to abandon them for any supposed good he might do the State. The game was not worth the candle, and so he concluded to withdraw in favor of Judge Clay—his only competitor—and let the State suffer. However, three years ago, Dick rallied his patriotism and beat Judge Clay for the Supreme Bench. Hence, as I said, honors are easy between them, and now they are to be seen cooing and smiling and chattering with each other with all the earnestness and sincerity of a pair of fashionable beauties."

While Dr. Blake was talking, Judge Somers sat smiling, now and then interjecting a remark which received no attention from the speaker. When the doctor finished his story of the judicial campaign, the judge asked:

"Dr. Hamilton, did you know that Gus once took painting lessons? It was during our first year at Harvard that he became convinced that he was a great artist in embryo and became enthused

with a desire to develop his dormant talent. His love of nature pointed out landscape painting as his forte. Selecting an instructor, he devoted himself to his beloved art for about six months, when his instructor called on him for an original sketch. Gus immediately went to work and quickly furnished the desired article. When the instructor saw it he gave Gus full credit for originality. It was intended to represent about a half-mile of valley, with a stream flowing through it. Cows were feeding—here and there was a tree—near by there was a rustic cabin and a man overlooking his herd. In the distance the stream was almost as narrow as it was at your feet—the cows were large enough to browse on the tops of the trees, and the man could easily straddle the cabin. The instructor was furious and told Gus that he didn't have the faintest idea of proportion, and that he knew no more about perspective than one of his cows. Gus told me about it in our room. He was highly indignant, and having heard what Disraeli did when he failed in his first effort and was jeered in the House of Commons, he struck himself dramatically on the breast and with a tragic air exclaimed, 'It is in here and it shall come out.' But he quitted landscape painting and betook himself to something for which he had a natural talent—word painting.

"By the way, in this connection an anecdote suggests itself which Judge Clay told me only a few days ago. It illustrates what I mean by word painting as applied to Gus. Jim Giles, a man of doubt-

ful reputation, had brought an action against John Morris sounding in damages. On the trial Jim testified for himself and had made out a strong case. The attorney for the defendant undertook to break down Jim's reputation for veracity. Among other witnesses he called Bill Stone. Bill is a man with plenty of brains and much shrewdness, but without education. The attorney went through with the usual preliminaries and put the question, 'Would you believe him on his oath?' Bill talked in a circle and could not be brought to the point. The question had been put several times without the desired result, when Clay, turning to the witness, said, 'Answer the question, sir, and answer yes or no.' Bill deposited his quid, scraped the floor with his foot, looked sorrowfully at Jim and with some hesitation said: 'See here, Jedge, it's kinder this way. Jim and me was boys together and we has been neighbors ever since. I like Jim. Jim has his bad streaks in him and, Jedge, Jim has some mighty good streaks in him, and, Jedge, it's mighty hard on me to go back on Jim. But I must say, Jedge—if I must tell what the neighbors say—Jim has a mighty lively imagination, Jedge, mighty lively! Now, Gus, there you are."

"*Multum in parvo,*" called out Hamilton; "what do you say to that, Doctor?"

Blake was laughing as he answered: "The joke? Well, I think it fairly good, considering it has been filtered through a pair of lawyers so dry that they are waterproof—only I don't see the point. But that is the trouble with most of Dick's jokes."

CHAPTER XIII

Several weeks had passed when Hamilton, having finished his professional duties for the morning, called at Tragor's drug store to superintend the filling of a prescription. As he entered he passed Carson and several others engaged in conversation. Speaking, he passed on and was busy for some time assisting the clerk in compounding and filling the prescription. When he was leaving he was stopped by Carson and asked to examine a steel engraving. It was a large and beautifully executed picture representing the surrender at Appomattox, with Grant and Lee and the apple tree in the foreground. Carson remarked:

"I hear that you are a connoisseur and we would like to have your judgment of this picture."

"Madame Rumor, Mr. Carson, makes many mistakes, as we all know, and I regret to admit that I am not cultured in such matters."

Looking carefully at the picture, he added: "I don't think anyone could find fault with the execution of this picture, for it is certainly very superior. It has, however, a very serious fault, a fault only too common in pictures of this kind. It creates a false impression, because it is not true to history—the surrender did not take place under the apple tree. The picture is a false education."

"But, Doctor, you must have seen many pictures not only at home, but abroad, the sight of which would cultivate the taste."

"Yes, I have seen many, and some of them very famous pictures. I have seen those in the Louvre, in the Pitti palace and in other places, and thousands have seen them, but it can hardly be contended that the privilege of seeing and enjoying can confer the taste and judgment necessary to the connoisseur. I am not even an amateur, for I look and enjoy for the time and pass on without thinking of the picture afterward—except as a pleasant remembrance.

"I understand Dr. Hamilton," said Percival, "and agree with him. I have seen pictures by the cartload—the old masters and the Renaissance,—whatever that is,—but when it comes to shades and shadows, the blending of colors, the natural tint, and the other thousand and one things so essential to the art critic, I simply know nothing about them."

"Well," said Carson, "while I suspect Dr. Hamilton of placing an estimate upon himself altogether too modest, we will not argue the question, as it is not a matter of present importance. But, Doctor, you like the picture, and it may be that you would like to own it."

"I never saw the picture until a few minutes ago, and I am at a loss to understand why you think I would like to own it."

"First, because you say it is a beautiful picture.

Second, because you have the opportunity of possessing it at a small figure."

"Still I do not understand you, Mr. Carson."

"We are raffling the picture, and we thought, perhaps, that you would like to take a chance—it is only five dollars."

"In the first place, I have no place for the picture if I had it. In the second place, I do not engage in games of chance."

With a bantering air Carson said: "Come, Doctor, that will do to tell to the marines, but we are not of those who have their homes on the ocean wave. You forget that you have a reputation that spreads to two continents. All the chances are taken except three. Shall we assign them to you?"

"I have already answered your question—I do not engage in games of chance."

With a tone of sarcasm, Carson said: "Then you are not living up to the reputation you established in Paris and New York?"

"I admit that I have a reputation for gaming in those cities. Perhaps I was considered a plunger. But for reasons satisfactory to myself, I am now living above that reputation, and—since Mr. Carson has been following my footsteps—I trust he will continue to follow."

Carson sneeringly replied: "Ah! we are virtuous, are we?—and there shall be no more cakes and ale. Dr. Hamilton's reformation is sudden, but it is not without method and purpose—in Denver."

Hamilton's voice was low and clear, without a

tremor, as he answered: "That my reformation, as you are pleased to term it, was somewhat sudden, is true. If others see proper to indulge in cakes and ale, it is none of my business and I have no criticism to make. If I decline to indulge in cakes and ale, that is my business, and I intend to see that it is respected. The insinuation that I have an ulterior object in view is unworthy of the gentleman."

Carson bounded forward, but was caught and held by his friend. Dalzell, who had come in just in time to hear Carson's last remark and Hamilton's rejoinder, touched the latter on the shoulder and said:

"You are wanted at your office."

"It is impossible for me to go. Who wants me?"

"I want you, and go you must."

Carson had been struggling with his friends, but some ladies coming in, quiet was restored and the parties went out on the street. Hamilton, with Dalzell, went in the direction of his office. Carson started to follow, but his friend stopped him, Percival saying:

"No, you must not go in that direction. You have already committed a blunder and put yourself at a disadvantage. Your conduct in this matter is without excuse. If Hamilton does not care to engage in a raffle it is none of your business. When you dragged in his past you were rudely aggressive, and when you threw out innuendoes you

were grossly offensive. You had better let the whole matter drop."

"I don't care. I know him to be a hypocrite, and I am determined to unmask him and hold him up to public ridicule."

"Carson, you are mistaken in your man. What can you show more than he admits? That he has been a gamester, he does not deny. What more can you prove? You had better let him alone. He is no hypocrite—he means just what he says and he has the courage to maintain it. Take my advice—go to your rooms and cool off."

When Hamilton and Dalzell reached the office, Dalzell said:

'I saw and heard the ending, and I want to know the beginning of your trouble with Carson. Tell me all about it."

When Hamilton had finished telling him, Dalzell added:

"I don't see how you could have avoided the issue. I am sorry it occurred and I fear further trouble, because Carson prides himself on his fighting qualities."

"Well, I am no fighting man, Dalzell, and as a general thing my photo might serve for a flag of truce. But I can tell you what I am, my friend, I am the most accommodating man you ever saw, and I am always willing to accommodate an enemy."

Dalzell laughed. "I believe you, Hamilton; but if you didn't want to fight, why did you question Carson's gentility?"

"Because I thought I was accommodating him. To be frank, I believe he sought the trouble, but why I cannot imagine. When you find a man leading off in that kind of business the best thing you can do is to precipitate it. Such a course is almost sure to disconcert him and give you the advantage. I believe he had heard of what he calls my reformation, and merely seized upon the raffle business to bring on the brawl in the presence of his friends with the view of bullying and humiliating me. If he is satisfied with the result of his experiment, I have no right to complain."

"You are right. I know Inez told him about the breeze that sprang up between you and me—and the cause of it. Knowing your views, he did not expect you to engage in the raffle, and the construction you have placed upon his conduct must be correct. As to Carson's object, as you seem to be a little dense just there, I will suggest an explanation. Evidently he does not like you, and he thinks he sees in you an enemy to his plans for the future. He is madly in love with Kate Somers, or with her social position and long purse that is to be, and he has taken it into his head that Cupid has afflicted you with the same disease, and that you are disposed to do business at the same place and with the same person. Have I surprised and shocked you?"

"Yes, Dalzell, you both surprise and shock me. Carson's preference is no secret, but if I have ever manifested a preference for Miss Somers, I am not conscious of it. I appreciate her socially and

intellectually, but I am certain I have not crossed the line of friendship by word or look."

Dalzell laughed and quoted:

"O, would some power the gift to gie us—"

Hamilton interrupted with: "What do you mean, Dalzell? Do you mean to intimate that I have been unconsciously displaying an undue fondness for Miss Somers?"

"Not at all, my friend, not at all. You are a gentleman, and a gentleman has too much regard for the woman of his choice to annoy her with a public display of his preference. But the consensus of opinion is, my friend, that you have a very high appreciation of Kate Somers's good qualities. But it is not your preference that disturbs Carson, but the fear that Kate may value it if allowed to manifest itself."

"As far as I can see she gives herself to the entertainment of Carson more than to any one else."

"Carson maneuvers to that end in the hope, no doubt, of committing her in the opinion of the public, and thus strengthen himself in her estimation. But he will not succeed, for I feel sure that she has recently had the opportunity of calling herself Mrs. Carson, and I feel equally certain that she declined that honor. Carson, however, like most men in love, is so stricken with idiocy that he cannot conceive of any objection to himself, and imagines that he would win but for outside influence—but for somebody standing in his way. But we have talked

enough about Carson. What say you to a game of billiards. You beat me the last time we played and I am thirsting for my revenge."

"Meet me in one hour at Van Tromp's rooms and I will give you an opportunity to slake your thirst."

CHAPTER XIV

Kate was a graceful rider and very fond of exercise in the saddle. She had a thoroughbred with a strain of the Arabian, jet black, spirited but gentle. The animal was a great pet with Kate, and it would follow her about and come at her beck and call, knowing that the reward would be a lump of sugar. Kate and Hamilton had made several excursions beyond the limits of the city in quest of health and pleasure. The morning after the Carson affair, Hamilton felt dispirited and had gone about his duties in a perfunctory way. In the afternoon he decided that a rough and rapid ride was necessary. He phoned for his horse. Mounting him, he found Hero full of life, ready for the heat and pressing on the bit. When he reached the suburbs he loosened the reins and Hero went off into half-racing speed. This pace had been kept up for some time, when Hamilton saw in the distance a lady and gentleman on horseback approaching at a canter. He knew Kate by her poise and easy carriage, responsive to the movements of her mount, and he was soon able to see that Carson was the man riding at her side. As they neared each other, Hamilton brought Hero down to a walk. Kate and Carson did not slacken their speed, and,

when in the act of passing Hamilton, Carson, looking him full in the face with an air of proprietorship, leaned over toward Kate as if he wished to whisper something in her ear. Just at this moment a thoughtless boy, not observing the riders or not caring, discharged a gun from some undergrowth near the roadside. Hero, having been trained in the hunting field and accustomed to firearms, was not gun-shy and he made but little demonstration. Not so with the other horses. The sudden whirl of Carson's horse sent him headlong to the ground, where he lay motionless. Kate was in the act of rising with her mount, and the unexpected whirl of her horse lifted her from her saddle and shot her through the air in the direction of Hamilton. With lightning speed he threw out his arm, caught her, and drew her to him. With this performance Hero became greatly excited. He began to prance and pitch, and swerved from the road into the undergrowth. For a few seconds the struggle was desperate and taxed Hamilton's utmost strength. His hold upon Kate was somewhat precarious, and he found it almost impossible to protect her as she was dragged among the bushes, and at the same time guide Hero and check him in his bad behavior. As soon as he could he dismounted and placed Kate on her feet. By this time, however, she was almost limp, and she reeled and was unable to stand. He caught her up in his arms and carried her a few paces to a rock, where she could sit and rest in a reclining position. As he seated her, he said:

"Miss Somers, you must pardon me, but it was no time for ceremony. I felt compelled to act. Lean against the rock until you are quite recovered."

He took off his hat and fanned her for several minutes, and then asked:

"Are you hurt? Do you feel any pain?"

Without opening her eyes, she answered:

"No; but I was so frightened! When the horse left the road I expected to be killed."

She had been very pale, but the blood was returning to her cheeks as she opened her eyes and with a catch in her voice said:

"Dr. Hamilton I am at a loss for words to express my thanks. You must come and see us at home and learn how happy you have made my father. But, Doctor, what of Mr. Carson? I think he was thrown from his horse."

"Yes, he was riding very carelessly at the moment, and I fear he has met with a bad fall. I hardly know what to do. He may need assistance, but I am not willing to leave you here alone."

"I am all right, Doctor. I am quite able to walk that distance, and I will go back with you."

Returning, they found Carson still lying in the road and in an unconscious condition. His face was colorless. Kate exclaimed in a startled and awed tone: "Doctor, he is dead."

Hamilton continued his rapid examination, apparently not noticing her startled exclamation. When satisfied he looked up and said:

"Miss Somers, he is not dead. He struck partly

on his shoulder, as his torn coat shows, and thus his head was saved from the full force of the fall. I hope it is only a bad case of shock.

Just at this time Percival drove up in a phaeton. He sprang out and came to Hamilton's assistance, at the same time asking how it all happened. In the midst of his work Hamilton explained and remarked, "I need a heart tonic. Mr. Percival, the circumstance must excuse the question, have you any brandy with you?"

"No, but I know the driver has something of the kind. Here, John, give Dr. Hamilton that flask that you have been trying to conceal in your pocket, and be in a hurry about it."

By this time Carson was showing signs of returning consciousness. He opened his eyes and looked around in a dazed, dreamy way, and closed them again. Hamilton took the flask and succeeded in getting him to swallow a few drops of the brandy. Waiting a little while, he got him to take more, and in a few minutes he opened his eyes again and then rose to a sitting posture. He was evidently still under the influence of the shock, and his looks showed that he was trying to recall the accident. Hamilton, after watching him a minute, said:

"Mr. Carson, you must take a little more of this brandy, and I think you will soon be yourself again —you will be all right in a few minutes." He did so, and the blood came back to his face and intelligence to his eyes.

"I have just been trying to think how it all hap-

pened. Didn't somebody fire a gun—and—I can't remember anything more. What became of Miss Kate? Did she get hurt?"

"I am here, Mr. Carson. I was badly frightened, but escaped without injury."

Carson rested for a time, and then, with Percival's assistance, he struggled to his feet.

"Mr. Carson," said Hamilton, "you and Miss Somers must get in the phaeton with Mr. Percival, who will see you to your homes."

With Percival's help, Carson got into the phaeton without saying a word. Kate lingered behind and said to Hamilton:

"We will expect you this evening. I know my father will not rest until he sees you." She then stepped into the conveyance and it drove off.

Hamilton mounted Hero and made his way slowly back to his office in a meditative mood. From what he had seen and heard, he inclined strongly to the opinion that Kate was attached, if not actually engaged, to Carson. He began to fear that Dalzell did not know what he was talking about when he asserted that she would never marry him. Meditating on these things, he remained in his office until it was time to start to the Somers residence.

Dr. Blake had been detained at the hospital, and Judge Somers was engaged in his library, when Hamilton arrived to find Kate sitting alone on the piazza. She came quickly forward and gave him a cordial greeting and a seat beside her, saying:

"Father is in the library listening to the reading

of some dry-as-dust papers by one of those troublesome lawyers that know how to put in an appearance at the wrong time. I will not tell father that you are here, for it would give him the fidgets, but if that lawyer fails to get to the much-desired clause 'And the Petitioner will ever pray, etc.,' in a reasonable time, he will be sent about his business, for father is expecting you and he will not permit himself to be long delayed. Until he comes you will have to put up with such entertainment as I can give you."

"Circumstances, Miss Somers, sometimes make martyrs of us all, and I feel that mine is akin to that of Stephen."

"Why, Stephen was stoned to death. I hope I am not so bad as that."

The coming of the visiting lawyer, followed by Judge Somers, put an end to this biblical chat. The judge went direct to Hamilton, seized him with both his hands, and with a heart-quiver in his voice thanked him for what he called his heroic conduct in saving Kate's life.

In the midst of the giving of thanks, Dr. Blake came in and asked what it was all about. He was obviously much moved as Kate related the adventure and told how she was rescued by Hamilton.

"Well, like my friend Byron," said Dr. Blake, "you went to sleep last night only an ordinary mortal and to-day you are famous. You are a lucky fellow, but you know the kind of people the old adage says have the luck. Come here, Kate, come

here. I want to feel your pulse and see if you are in a normal condition."

Going to him, he pulled her down on his lap, and twining his arms about her, with a huskiness in his voice that was not natural he said:

"You are a dear girl, if you are a storm-center of trouble, and I cannot get along without you, for I must have somebody with whom I can quarrel. Now go to your seat and behave yourself for the rest of the evening like a good little girl."

"And if I do not behave myself, what then, Uncle Gus?"

"Well, I suppose I will have to kiss you again and make friends. Now, don't go and misbehave just in order to get another kiss."

The conversation had been flowing pleasantly for some time, when Hamilton's office boy made his appearance with a telegram. Opening it, he read:

"Uncle George died yesterday intestate. You are the next of kin and only heir. You must come immediately. SID LIVINGSTONE."

Turning to Dr. Blake, he asked when the next train left for Chicago.

"The next train for Chicago leaves the depot at eleven o'clock But what's the matter, that you are rushing off to that city?"

"And it is now ten o'clock," said Hamilton. "I have one hour in which to catch that train, and I must make it. I am going to New York. This telegram tells me that my Uncle George is dead,

my father's brother, and that my immediate presence is necessary."

Kate followed him to the stoop and, holding out her hand to bid him good night, said:

"You are going to your old home and I want to make you my messenger. When you meet Grace, as I know you will, tell her I am expecting her at an early day, and the sooner she comes the warmer the welcome."

"I will be your faithful messenger, Miss Somers, and I assure you the message will lighten the journey."

"But why so formal? I thought I gave you permission, once upon a time, to call me Kate."

"I thought you did not know or that you had forgotten—"

"I suspect, Dr. Hamilton, that is not your only mistake," interrupted Kate.

Hamilton was beginning to flounder badly and was trying to ask what she meant, when she withdrew her hand, saying: "Doctor, if you are going to Chicago to-night, you have no time to lose—you will miss your train, and I bid you *au revoir.*"

CHAPTER XV

When Hamilton reached New York it was night, and he went to his hotel and to bed. Next morning he called at Livingstone's rooms, and found him standing before the glass arranging his tie."

"Well, Sid, languidly lazy as in the days of yore, eh?"

"Hello, Jack, old fellow, when and how did you get here? You are twenty-four hours sooner than I expected you, but I am only the more delighted. Sit down, sit down. I will have breakfast here in a few minutes, and while we are waiting you can tell me something about yourself and your doings."

"I got here last night per train, of course—I was on my way in an hour after I received your telegram. I have been up for some time brushing the dew from the lawn in true Western farmer-like style; and as for breakfast, I had that more than an hour ago—about the time you turned over for your morning nap. As to news, you forget that I have been absent for a year and more. Here I am all the way from Denver hungry to hear what you and the boys have been doing all this time, so you may as well begin to unfold your budget."

"Jack, you made a big hole in our club when

you threw down your colors and fled. It was an awful surprise to the boys, and they are wondering how you could have done it. We have stuck together, however, and in a general way we have run things in the old grooves and have kept the shuttle flying. Boys will be boys, as Palmerston at seventy said, when his wife caught him kissing the maid."

In this way the conversation flowed on, Hamilton asking questions and Livingstone answering and detailing the actings and doings of former friends for the past year, until Livingstone had finished the breakfast he ordered, when Hamilton said:

"Sid, I am here in response to your telegram, and it means business. Tell me what you know about my Uncle George and his affairs. I know absolutely nothing, and I am much surprised that he died intestate, knowing that his property, if he left any, would descend to me."

"I will surprise you still more when I tell you that the old flint died leaving an estate of several hundred thousand dollars, and that he died intestate after duly considering the matter. A very pretty property to begin the next world with if he could have taken it with him. However, as he managed to get along here without the use of it for eighty years and more, I take it for granted that the old mole will know how to make his way in the future."

Hamilton looked at his friend for a few minutes, utterly bewildered.

"Sid, are you not mistaken. How do you know all this?"

"I am not mistaken, and I can soon satisfy you on this point. If you remember, I met the old miser here two or three times when these rooms belonged to you. From the fact of meeting me here he took it for granted that I was your friend. Be that as it may, two days before he died he sent for me—the messenger giving me the street and number. My friendship for you caused me to go to him—thinking the old curmudgeon might be in some trouble, possibly in pecuniary want, for I remembered that he claimed to be very poor, and I had reason to believe that he had occasionally borrowed money from you. I found him in a second-rate boarding-house and in a room that had been furnished with an eye to economy rather than comfort. I found him sick and in bed, and when I politely remarked that I was sorry to find him unwell, he curtly informed me that he had not sent for me in quest of sympathy—said he had been sick for several days and did not expect to get well. When I suggested a doctor might be of some service to him, he cut the matter short by telling me he had no respect for pill-makers and blood-letters; that they are a set of impostors, frauds and cormorants—no better than birds of prey that live by their bills; and, furthermore, he had not sent for me in search of advice. His language was a little irritating to a man of my profession, for while most of us do live by our bills, we do not care to be compared to birds of prey, and while we may be

mixed up with a little fraud and bread pills, all for the good of the patient, we do not care to be told about it. However, I restrained myself, and merely said to him that his messenger had informed me that he wanted to see me, and now that I had come I would be pleased to know what I could do for him. What do you suppose was the old money-blister's answer? 'Nothing; I don't want you to do anything for me.' I confess, Jack, I felt like kicking the old cuss, if he was your uncle. I looked at him for a few moments, and was about to leave the room, when he said: 'If you are through asking questions and giving advice, sit down and let me ask you a few questions. You are a friend to Jack Hamilton, I think? I nodded my head. 'He is living in Denver, I believe?' I again nodded my head. 'Before he went to Denver he had squandered the fortune his father left him—had about struck bottom, hadn't he?' I was silent and immovable. He looked at me for fully a minute, and then, with a kind of chuckling laugh, said, "You can't deny it, eh? Well I know it, whether you admit it or not. What is Jack doing in Denver?' I told him you were engaged in the practice of your profession. 'I reckon he is still gambling, drinking, and spending all the money he can get his hands on, eh?' I told him I thought you were an all-round reformed man. 'Got any proof?' I told him what had passed between you and me and what I had heard you say. 'The poorest proof you could possibly give.' After this complimentary remark, he lay still for a few min-

utes and then said, 'I thought you had better sense than to take a convict's word about his innocence, or a drunkard's about his repentance while the headache is on, or a spendthrift's about his reformation when he is out of money.' I was disgusted and indignant. I rose up to leave, after telling the old money-shark what I thought of him. Before I could begin, he exclaimed, 'Sit down and hear me out. I have better proof than Jack's word that what you tell me is true. I have heard from Denver and I know that he is now behaving himself like a sensible man.' When I expressed my surprise, he added, 'Yes, I know all about Jack—his actings and doings.' I told him that I did not know that he had friends and correspondents in Denver. The old cynic replied, 'Any man's your friend if you will pay him enough, and any man will correspond with you if you make it to his advantage. My information comes through the head of the detective force. I have had Jack shadowed for several months, and now I'll tell you why I had it done and why I sent for you. You are Jack's friend. I am not quite as poor as some people think I am—Jack, for instance. I have held on to my money, but the time has come when I must leave it—must give it up, and let somebody have it. I am sorry that I can't carry it with me, but as I can't, I have concluded to let Jack have it. Not that I care anything for him, but that I dislike him a little less than I do the rest of my kin.' He paused, and I suggested that he would like to see a lawyer. Oh, no! Oh, no! Lawyers are greater frauds than

doctors, if that be possible. At one time I did think of making a will, but I didn't feel able to pay the fee, and the law, you know, gives the little that I have to Jack as my next of kin.'

"Taking a large sealed envelope from under his pillow, he said:

" 'You will find a list of all my things in here and where they are to be found. I will put it into your hands upon one condition—that you will not open it until I am dead and that you will then telegraph Jack to come on and take possession. I have no confidence in you or anybody else. I only think it better for that list of my things to be in the hands of a man who claims to be a friend to Jack, than to let it fall into the hands of some fellow rummaging round after I am dead—Jack may stand a better chance of getting it.'

He gave me the envelope, and as he did so he intimated that my presence was no longer desired. Two days after, he died of a disease that is getting to be only too common,—heart failure,—which is a euphemistic way that we doctors have of admitting that we really didn't know what was the matter with the patient. I then opened the envelope, and if Vesuvius and Etna had both burst forth under my feet I could not have been more surprised than I was, as I read the long list of government bonds, railroad stocks, and bank stocks—all sound and good, and interest bearing, and aggregating, as I said, several hundred thousand dollars. In the envelope I also found a key and a slip of paper on which was written National Park Bank. At first

I thought the old razor was trying to perpetrate a practical joke to take effect after his death and have a little skeleton fun down in Hades. On second thought, however, I concluded that it could do no harm to interview the president of the bank, with whom I was on pleasant terms and intimate business relations. I showed him the list and asked him what he knew about it. He looked it over and said: 'I can't speak positively, but I am of opinion that the list is correct, and I think you will find all these bonds and stocks in the zinc box which he kept in the vault. I suppose I am the only man to whom he would talk. He was an educated eccentric—never had a decent suit of clothes—would walk a mile to keep from speaking to you—was always in fear of starvation—imagined that everybody was trying to swindle him—was always pleading poverty—had an abnormal genius for money-making, and his speculative instinct was unerring. He was prouder in his apparent poverty than Vanderbilt could possibly be with his millions. Yes, I think the list of bonds and stocks is about correct. In addition, you will find a bank book somewhere showing several thousand dollars on deposit in this bank which he was seeking to invest at the time of his death.' I left in a kind of Arabian night dream, went to the office, sent you the telegram that you received, and now you know as much as I do."

"It is wonderful," said Hamilton. "This old man, as I am told, was just finishing his junior year at Yale when his father died leaving him a com-

fortable fortune. He was then considered a young man of good ability and some promise, but of retiring disposition and moody habits. He left college and withdrew from society, avoiding especially my father, the only male member of the family. He hid himself in some cheap boarding-house and could not be seen for weeks at a time. When he could be seen his dress was not respectable, and upon my father's remonstrating with him he became furious and refused all further intercourse. It was not long before he managed to let it be known that he had lost his last dollar in speculation, that he was living in abject poverty, and this reputation he succeeded in keeping alive for about a half-century—until his death. I had heard of his existence, but I never met with him until after my return from Europe. It was during the last two years of my stay here that he made himself known to me. He came to my room one morning before I was dressed—he always came before business hours—made himself known, begged that I would lend him ten dollars, and sniffled and whined about his poverty. He was thinly dressed and shivering with cold. He said he was about to be turned out of his boarding-house—that ten dollars would satisfy the harpy with whom he was boarding and save him from starving. Of course, I let him have the money and offered him more, which he refused. This farce was repeated several times before I went to Denver—"

"Oh, well," interrupted Livingstone, "stop your soliloquizing tone. It is neither profitable to the

departed nor entertaining to me. I have no doubt the old fraud is now in pandemonium, holding high carnival with Dives over their financial successes in this world. The only good thing he ever did was when he took his departure, and he wouldn't have done that only he couldn't help it. I haven't a doubt that he swindled old Charon out of his ferry fee. My surprise, however, is that he didn't leave his money to some institution of—"

"I am glad he did not," interrupted Hamilton. "If there is one man for whom I feel a more profound contempt than for another, it is the man who clings to his possessions to the last breath and then gives them to some charitable institution or educational school. Practically, he is giving away, under the forms of law, the goods of another."

"Jack, you seem to have dropped into a moralizing and philosophic vein, but as I occasionally go to hear Dr. Flower, who elocutionizes on such subjects every Sunday from the pulpit, and makes the sinner feel comfortable by showing him how to get to heaven on flowery beds of ease, I would prefer to hear you on other themes. Tell me about Denver, why you like it, and of its future prospects and possibilities."

So the conversation flowed on about the climatic advantages of the country, the magnificent scenery, mountains piled upon mountains until they rest against the sky, the grand waterfalls, the wonderful gulches, the fishing waters, the rapid development of Denver and the large investments made there by Eastern capitalists, until Hamilton sug-

gested a call at the bank and the investigation of the zinc box. They reached the bank to find the President in his office. The list of bonds and stocks was soon verified and found to be correct. The bank book which was found in the box showed twenty thousand dollars on deposit, for which the old man was seeking investment when he died. Before he could get possession, administration was necessary, and Hamilton took the required preliminary steps without delay.

CHAPTER XVI

Some ten days after Hamilton left for New York, Kate was sitting on the piazza, when Dr. Blake came in from his hospital and from seeing some of Hamilton's patients. He took a chair near Kate, remarking as he did so:

"I received a letter from Hamilton to-day, and he tells me he will not be here for four or five weeks. I wish he would hurry his coming, for his practice is more extensive than even I supposed."

"I am sorry, Uncle Gus, that this affliction has befallen you in your old age, but I trust that you will be able to hold out until his return. What else did he say and what is keeping him so long? I got a telegram from Grace to-day, saying that she would be here Monday, and I did hope that Dr. Hamilton would be able to accompany her."

"Kate, you are a sly Kitty, but I am not in need of any of your sham sympathy, and you must not poke any of your foxy fun at me, for I would have you to understand, and the rest of womankind in particular, that I am still on my first legs and among the eligibles—widows excepted. When I said I was tired I had no reference to the flesh, for the work in itself is a mere pastime, and I have lots of fun with some of the imaginative sick ones. I

only mean that I have been out of that line so long that the harness doesn't feel comfortable at times, and as to the fun—well, you know that even a child can get too much candy."

"But what's the matter with the widows, Uncle Gus?"

"That fellow had an experience who said, 'Beware of vidders.' They are just a little bit too knowing, and can land their fish before the poor fellow is conscious of having bitten at the hook. They are my special amusement, and I enjoy them very much—at a distance. Within arm's length they are too cooingly fetching, and when they settle down to ensnare their victim they are just too utterly too-too."

"Uncle Gus, measured by your declared standard, you are fated for a widow, for your unassuming and retiring modesty is at all times crying out for help. But you haven't answered my question about Dr. Hamilton."

"Oh, you want to know what he says in his letter and why he remains so long in New York, eh? Well, in order to get you down to a few sensible and rational remarks I had better puncture your vanity and tell you he made no reference to you in a long letter, and—"

"On the contrary," interrupted Kate, "you build me up in my own esteem and at the same time you increase my respect for Dr. Hamilton."

"How so, you compound of vague generalities and refined subtleties?"

"Because, in my opinion, no really refined

woman cares to have herself made the subject of gossip in an ordinary letter between male correspondents. In not mentioning my name, then, he has paid me a compliment. It shows also that Dr. Hamilton is appreciative of the proprieties, and that should strengthen him in the esteem of everybody who regards culture and refinement."

Dr. Blake looked fixedly at her until she exclaimed in some confusion:

"What makes you look at me in that way?"

"I was only admiring your skill in handling the wisdom of the diplomat, who said, 'Language is given us to conceal our thoughts.' But as you are beginning to fly the colors of the pirate we will not enter into details. In one thing, however, you are greatly mistaken—it was no ordinary letter that I received from Hamilton."

"Well, why don't you tell me wherein it is extraordinary? Does he excel in letter-writing? If he does, it is a rare gift, and not generally appreciated."

"I had no reference to the manner and style of the letter, but to its contents, the subject-matter of the letter, and I think you will agree with me that it is a little out of the ordinary."

"Well, why don't you go on and tell me? I believe you are drawing on your imagination and making a mountain out of a mole hill in order to excite my curiosity."

"I admit it is a great surprise to me, and I think he might have given us some intimation before he left."

"I don't believe there is anything unusual in that letter, or you would not linger so long in the telling of it."

"What if I were to tell you he had taken unto himself a wife?"

"Then I would say I do not believe you. Grant, however, that he has, I don't see that there is anything unusual in that. In fact, it is very common—most people marry."

"But the manner of it, Kate—the manner of it."

"You have said nothing about the manner. I suppose a clergyman officiated, as usual."

"Well, jesting aside; what if I were to tell you he has inherited several hundred thousand dollars?"

"I would tell you that I do not believe one word of it."

"Well, Kate, that is just what his letter tells me, and I think you will agree with me that such letters are not very common."

"They are so very uncommon that I do not believe you have any such letter from Dr. Hamilton."

"I suppose, then, that your Uncle Gus has gone into the business of lying, has he?"

"No, for my Uncle Gus does not expect me to believe his marvelous tale about the several hundred thousand dollars. He is only industriously cultivating his one talent—that of teasing."

"You must remember he was here the night he left and received a telegram calling him to New York? He said nothing about the contents of the telegram further than that it called him away and

that he must leave on the first train. From his letter I learn that the telegram informed him of the death of his only uncle, who had lived a life of miserly starvation that he might die the death of a fool and leave something like a half-million of money to a man for whom he had no love,—Hamilton,—but whom he did not hate quite as much as he did the rest of his relations. It was a glorious ambition, and points a moral and adorns a tale with all the force and effect of a trip-hammer. The estate was an astonishment and a wonder to the public, and to nobody more than to Hamilton. When living in New York the old sponge occasionally came begging for the loan of ten dollars and whining about the danger of being turned out of his boarding-house. He always got the money and he always forgot to repay it. His poverty would not allow him to send for a doctor in his last illness, and he refused to make a will because he was too poor to fee a lawyer. Two days before he died he sent for a man that he had met at Hamilton's rooms and whom he knew to be Hamilton's friend, and gave him a list of all his worldly goods enclosed in a sealed envelope, on condition that the seal should not be broken until the old fraud had gone to keep company with the gentleman that made complaint against Job and who afterwards quoted scripture from the pinnacle of Solomon's temple.

Hearing that the old money-shark had gone to the waterless regions, Hamilton's friend opened the envelope to find a list of bonds and stocks that

simply paralyzed him for a time. Halfway suspecting that the old cinder was trying to perpetrate a *post-mortem* joke, he rushed to the bank of deposit to find the list correct. Then it was that he sent the telegram that hurried Hamilton to New York. Now you know as much as I do; but there's the letter, which you can read and dispel your unbelief, while I go to my den in search of slippers and cigars for the evening."

Kate had read the letter and was apparently lost in thought and looking into vacancy, when he returned and said: "Well, my doubting Thomas, having put your finger into the print of the nails and thrust your hand into the side, do you now believe, and what do you think of it?"

"I was just thinking of that old man dying in poverty in the midst of his thousands, and how sure it is that our good deeds, sooner or later, will come home to us with their rewards."

"I am not good at conundrums, Kate, and I never guessed a riddle in my life. You will have to be more explicit as to your meaning."

"I was thinking how certainly the overweening love of money brings all that is earthly in our nature to the surface by perverting conscience and destroying all sense of moral obligation. It smothers every particle of the breath that was breathed into us when the Garden of Eden was planned—only the animal remains. Now, I have no doubt that Dr. Hamilton was disgusted with what he considered the mulish obstinacy of his uncle and with the low and dirty life he was leading, yet he always

gave when he asked, and in doing so, without thinking of it, he was casting bread upon the waters, which have returned to him a thousand fold. Unawares, he softened the old man's dislike, and the reward unsought has come to him. Are my thoughts worth a penny, Uncle Gus?"

"No; to moralize is about the cheapest thing on earth. It is suited only for the study or private room. It is not suited to social life, and the party attempting it only succeeds in making a bore of himself. It is a bad habit, as well as a cheap habit, and you ought not to indulge in it, except when alone or in your dreams, for it is all pretty much the product of dreamland."

"Are you not traveling within the borders of that dreamland?"

"Only for your benefit, Kate, only for your benefit, and to show you what a thin and unpalatable diet it is. But you made a remark just now that leads me to suppose that you believe in the theory of evolution. How about that?"

"To what remark do you refer? I do not recall it."

"You spoke of man as an animal when the breath of life was breathed into him."

"Oh, I shall not allow you to entangle me in any such discussion. In the first place, I know nothing about it, and in the second place, I incline to the opinion that it is all much ado about nothing."

"Do they make woman's rights the whole thing at Vassar? I thought they taught a little of every-

thing there. Now, from a scientific point of view, I incline to the theory of evolution, but looking at it from a biblical standpoint I agree with you, it is much ado about nothing, and these pulpit maniacs, who have been raving about it and denouncing it as heresy, have simply been making superb asses of themselves. We are told that all things were created in the beginning. When that was we do not know, but it was doubtless millions of years ago. If the Creator invested matter with certain forces and vitalities, as the evolutionists claim, and directed them into certain channels so that they would go on from age to age, and from period to period, evolving the higher type from the lower until the man animal was evolved, it seems to me a greater manifestation of omniscience and omnipotence than if he had simply taken so much clay and fashioned him as we now see him. It matters, then, very little how he got here, for under either view he is none the less the workmanship of the Creator and he did not become a responsible being until the breath of life was breathed into him. Before this he was a mere animal; he became a living soul and responsible only from the moment that the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils—from that moment the great majority of evolutionists are in full accord with the divines. What do you think of it, Kate?"

"I am not thinking about it at all, Uncle Gus, and if you are hunting a discussion you are wasting time. I know nothing about it and I care nothing about it. He is here, and it seems to me that his

ending is of much greater interest than his beginning."

"Enough said! If ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise, and it is unkind to disturb the dreamer when the dream is harmless."

They sat for some time in silence, when Kate asked:

"Uncle Gus, do you think Dr. Hamilton will return to Denver?"

"Certainly. Why do you ask such a question?"

"He is rich now and can afford to live in his old style among his old friends."

"I am satisfied that Denver will be his home in the future. He conceals nothing, and I have heard the story of his old life more than once in its every detail, both at home and abroad, and I am convinced that no earthly consideration could induce him to return to the old life again. When a man frankly admits his mistakes and by open conduct shows that he has turned his back upon the past, he gives proof of manhood and will power that commands confidence. It is the man that makes large professions and who at the same time seeks to hide and conceal the vices of his life that is not to be trusted, for the desire to conceal is a mistake of itself and evidence that he still holds the old flesh-pots in kind remembrance."

"I hope," said Kate, "that he will return, for I would regret very much to lose him from our set."

Dr. Blake, smiling, said:

"Is that all, Kate? You know you can confide in me."

She flushed, and in a jocose manner answered:

"No, and I will trust you if you will promise to be very, very discreet and will never, never tell."

"Go ahead, Kate. Neither the Council of Ten, nor the thumb-screw, nor red-hot pinchers, nor all combined, shall be able to get it out of me. If anybody questions me, I will lie like a first-class diplomat."

"On your own conditions I will tell you. I think I have done him some wrong and I would like to see him and make the *amende honorable.*"

"Surely, Kate, you haven't been flirting with Hamilton and lured him to a fall. I have always thought you incapable of such conduct."

"How you do rush to conclusions! No, I have never flirted with him, for he has never given me the chance even if I could have descended to such shallow conduct. Neither have I lured him to a fall, as you call it, for he never gave me the opportunity."

"Look here, Kate, you seem to be tickled about something, but I can't catch on to the fun. If you didn't wrong him in the way I surmised, how else could you have wronged him?"

"There you go again, as if a woman could wrong a man only in affairs of the heart. When did you first know Dr. Hamilton?"

"Well, of all the irrelevant stuff I ever heard you can get off the most of it. In the name of Pluto, what has my first knowledge of Hamilton got to do with the wrong you have done him?"

"I wouldn't have asked that question if I hadn't expected an answer."

"If it will serve as a cork-screw to draw your secret, I will say that the first time I saw Hamilton was when he called at my office with a letter of introduction from an old and valued friend of mine."

"But you don't give me the time he first came to your office."

"Pshaw! How can you expect it? I am not a walking chronological list of dates, past, present and to come. It was more than a year ago, and all that I now remember is that he said he had been in Denver about a month when he called at the office."

"Will it surprise you to know that I met him just about a month before you did, and elsewhere than in Denver?"

"Well, what of that? I suppose a great many people had met him, here or there, before I met him. There is nothing marvelous in that, and I know that you have spent a few days out of this city. But do you mean to say that you insulted or wronged him on sight?"

"Can't you wrong a man without insulting him, Uncle Gus?"

Of all the prating, perverse pieces of perversity, you excel! When you reach your well-earned place among the departed spirits I have no doubt you will be able to suggest to the ruler of that province an additional agony for poor old Tantalus. I surrender—I give it up—I throw up the sponge, and from now on you can umpire the game to suit your-

self. But don't forget, Kate, that I am listening to hear how you wronged Hamilton."

"Do you remember the railroad wreck in which my arm was broken?"

"Of course, I remember it. It was not so long ago, and I am not afflicted with loss of memory or softening of the brain."

"He was on the train that day and occupied the seat immediately behind me. I had occasion to notice him because of some trouble he had with an old rustic who sat just in front of me and seemed determined to keep the window up, through which dust and cinders came in a perfect stream. Dr. Hamilton, however, succeeded in having it lowered, and it was the manner in which he managed that old rustic that attracted my attention and amused me. When the crash came I was hurled forward toward the front of the coach, and I knew nothing more until I awoke at the Jones house to find myself in bed and Dr. Hamilton standing over me applying restoratives. After giving some instructions to Mrs. Jones, he left the room. When he had gone, I asked her what she knew about him and how I had been brought to her house. She told me that I had been pulled out of the wreck in an unconscious condition, and that he had picked me up and brought me to her house; that he then ordered in one of his trunks, opened it, took such restoratives as he had with him and went to work. She said she knew nothing about him, but supposed he was a friend of mine, and that his trunk was marked 'Dr. Jack Hamilton,

New York.' About this time he returned and told me, among other things, that my arm was broken and in need of immediate attention—gave me his name and assured me that he was equal to my present wants. Uncle Gus, I had heard all about him through Grace Russell, and I knew that he was a gentleman and skilled in his profession. I put myself under his care and you know with what result. When he asked me my name I made an inexcusable mistake in refusing to give it. I told him he might call me Kate, and that explains the telegram that father received, as you and he were boarding the train, which relieved your anxiety and which you said was directed to the general public. He sent it, and it was the very best he could do, as I refused to give him my name or that of my father. But what is worse, if possible, Uncle Gus, when you introduced him to me at the theater I met him as an utter stranger, and neither of us has since referred to the railroad wreck. I know, Uncle Gus, I have done wrong, very wrong, but you must not scold me too much, for you cannot imagine how thoroughly ashamed I am of myself and of my miserable conduct."

Dr. Blake looked at her for a minute, and to Kate it seemed a half hour, before he said:

"Well, of all the idiots I have ever met, you are entitled to the first prize. Surely, you don't mean to tell me, in all the hundred conversations you have had with Hamilton during the past year, you have not done yourself the justice nor him the politeness to refer to his kindness and service on that

occasion? I see but one way of escape for you. When he returns, tell him you met with Mrs. Jones during his absence; that, while you had no recollection of ever having seen her, she recognized you, recalled the railroad accident and made you acquainted with its details; that the shock and the fright at the time so affected your nervous system as to temporarily destroy your memory; that you are deeply indebted to Mrs. Jones for making known to you the facts of that accident, and that, now he knows your unfortunate condition on that occasion, you feel assured that he will no longer suspect you of apparently neglecting the ordinary courtesies of life. Of course he won't believe you, but you may be able, in this way, to awaken his sympathy and soften his contempt."

Kate's eyes were moist and there was a plaint in her voice as she replied:

"Uncle Gus, you are more than cruel! I came to you with my trouble and you make me a target for ridicule! You are simply brutal! I shall not adopt the way your wisdom points out, but when he returns and opportunity offers I shall make a frank, womanly statement to him. It will be truly humiliating, but I believe he is man enough to forgive. Uncle Gus, you are very intimate with him, and I would like to know if he has ever referred to the matter when talking with you?"

"Certainly not. Hamilton is a gentleman, and when he saw that you had forgotten, or desired to forget, it was impossible for him to remember.

But why have you kept all this from your father and from me?"

"I don't know. I wish I had told you, but I have gone on heaping blunder upon blunder until I am overcome with humiliation."

"Since you have told me what you have, I will tell you something going to show that I, too, am badly in need of a kicking machine for personal use. If I hadn't been as dense as the Rockies I would have known long ago that Hamilton dressed your arm."

"How could you, Uncle Gus, when you had never met him?"

"True, but I have met him since and I have seen his handy work. If you remember, I was strong in my praise, at the time, of the manner in which the work had been executed, and commented on it after we had gotten you home and wondered who could have done it. The appliances had not been used in the ordinary way, but after the fashion recently recommended by some of the most eminent surgeons. I had read all about it, but I had never tried it, nor had anybody else in this part of the country before the coming of Hamilton. If I had used my brains I would have known that he came about the time of the railroad wreck, and having seen him repair similar breaks in the self-same way, I ought to have recognized his workmanship if I had been possessed of a reasonable amount of brains."

By this time Kate was smiling, and said:

"After all, Uncle Gus, you are of some comfort

by diverting my thoughts; but I forgot to tell you that I did refer to the wreck and when in conversation with Dr. Hamilton."

"In the name of common sense, Kate, what do you mean? Do you mean to tell me that you have been sitting here all this time, with brimming eyes and sobbing voice, playing the actor's part and having some quiet fun out of your Uncle Gus?"

"Oh, no. Everything is just as bad as I told you."

"What!—did you bring the subject up and then offer no explanation? When and where did you make this last blunder?"

"In this way. As I told you, when he was repairing my arm, as you call it, he asked me my name, and I told him he might call me Kate. You may have observed, notwithstanding the friendship existing between us, that he persistently calls me Miss Somers. You may remember, also, that the night he left for New York he was here when the telegram reached him. He went away immediately on receipt of it, and I went with him to the steps of the veranda. Well, when he was shaking hands with me and bidding me good bye, as usual, he called me Miss Somers, and I asked him, 'Why so formal? I thought I gave you permission to call me Kate?' "

"Go on, Kate, it was a beautiful opening. What happened then?"

"Well, his language seemed a little confused. He stopped for further conversation, when I said, 'Dr. Hamilton, you will miss your train. Au re-

voir,' and I left him and returned to you and father."

Dr. Blake looked at her for a few moments as if at a loss for words to express himself. He seemed to be greatly astonished, and said:

"Kate, if it were not for the great respect I have for the clothes you wear, I would—and it would be the most satisfactory moment of my life—convert myself into the kicking machine of which mention has been made and which is so much needed. This last blunder, considering all the circumstances, and more particularly that he had, only that day, perhaps, saved you from a broken neck, was the greatest blunder of them all and inexcusably cruel. How could you forget yourself?"

"I am not so sure that I did forget myself, nor am I sure that I committed a blunder. As you say, it was a beautiful opening, but there was no time to take advantage of it. He barely had time to make ready and catch his train, and it would have been wrong to detain him. It was I that made the opening, and if the matter is of any interest to him I have no fear but that he will bring it up again after his return. In this way, Uncle Gus, you see I will find my opportunity for an explanation without having to seek it or to force it."

The doctor looked at her for a time in perfect silence as if quite overcome. Finally he remarked, as if talking to himself:

"Mother Eve was an innocent fledgling, what we would now call a back-number from away back, and her daughters are a great improvement on her

—in some respects. I wish we had another showing for the Garden of Eden! I would like to see his Satanic Majesty inject himself into a serpent and come fooling round the modern girl for a chit-chat with the intention of deceiving and entrapping her. He would quickly find himself outwitted, corralled and boxed, and traveling round the country as a side-show to some circus at ten cents a peep—leaving the preachers without a job and the rest of mankind safe for all the future. O for one more chance to pit the modern girl against the devil, and—Eden is ours! But here comes Dick, and the mice, you know, can only play when the cat is away."

"You must not forget your promise, Uncle Gus."

"No danger. Fear is a great stimulus to memory, and I am thoroughly afraid of the modern girl."

Judge Somers, catching the import of the last words, asked:

"What is that you are afraid of, Gus?"

"Snakes, Dick, snakes; and if one were to speak to me, somebody would be seen making tracks from that vicinity at the rate of a mile a minute. His snakeship would not be able to keep near enough to maintain even a running conversation."

"I don't understand you. What do you mean by such nonsense? Are you crazy?"

"No, but I soon would be if I were to meet with a talking snake. Kate and I were just now wondering how it was that Mother Eve could hold a confab with a snake and not be surprised and

alarmed at its power of speech and knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. You know she seemed to be quite at home with his snakeship, and the conversation nowhere shows that her composure was disturbed even with the slightest ripple. What do you think of it, Dick?"

CHAPTER XVII

When Hamilton had set the machinery of the law in motion he gave some attention to old friends and social pleasures. He spent an evening with Grace Russell, delivered Kate's message, discussed life in New York in a general way, but more particularly in detail the actings and doings of his old circle—about which there was plenty of gossip. He was gratified to learn that Grace had decided to visit Denver at an early day—that she would probably remain several weeks and that she might stretch her visit into several months, two or three. They had a jolly time relating their experiences of the past year, and before they separated Grace had consented to delay her departure for Denver until he was ready to return.

We are told that all things come to them who wait, and in this way Hamilton reached the end of even the law's delay. All the required formalities had been met; he had been put in possession of his property and he had arranged with Grace to leave for Denver the next day.

It was a balmy night and the zephyrs were such as love to linger in a lady's curl. His old club, of which Hamilton was still a member, was giving a banquet in his honor. The rooms were brilliantly

lighted; the members were out in full force, with Hamilton in their midst, and jocund jollity was running riot. Anecdote was rife, joke and jest were bandied to and fro, repartee played from one to the other like a shuttle in a weaver's loom, and the merriment and abandon were as joyous as those of the schoolboy when the shadows of the term time melt into the rays of the sunshine of the vacation.

"Say, Hamilton, is your hand as cunning with the cue as in the days of old, when you rollicked with the boys?" was the question of Perry Noble.

"I can't say that it is, as I now play billiards only in private."

"I am not sure that I understand you. What do you mean?"

"I mean that I never play in a public saloon—only in a private room or at a private house with personal friends."

"Well, I want to pit you against Hawthorn, who now wears the honors of this club. Will you play him?"

"I have no objection if it will contribute to the entertainment of our friends and if it meets with Hawthorn's approval."

They went to the billiard-room and the game was begun, and it quickly developed that the players were masterly matched. It had been progressing for some time, when Percy Howard came in, and, seeing the players, called out:

"Here is an X that Hawthorn beats the game. Who will take it?"

Livingstone, who was watching the game, answered:

"Put up your money, Howard; Hamilton leads by three points."

"That is just what I am offering to do—to put up," said Howard; "and if Hamilton has a friend who will back him, I will double the bet that Hawthorn wins the game."

"You had better take Livingstone's advice and put your money in your pocket," said Noble. Hamilton is not only leading by three points, but an ordinary player, such as I am, can see that Hawthorn has had the misfortune to leave the balls in such position on the table that Hamilton now has a run before him. However, if it is any accommodation to you, I will take the bet—say twenty dollars."

It was Hamilton's play, but he had stopped and had given attention to the betting conversation. When it was over, he said:

"Gentlemen, I trust you will not make us the subject of a bet. Hawthorn and I are merely trying to furnish a little entertainment for our friends, and at the same time, in a friendly way, test each other's skill at the game. What say you, Hawthorn, do you agree with me?"

Hawthorn was a cultured and refined gentleman. Personally he had no objection to betting in a small way or to being made the subject of a bet. He was quick of perception, always respectful of another's wishes, and seeing that Hamilton was in earnest, he replied:

"Gentlemen, I agree with Hamilton. Let the

bet be declared off. I will add, for Howard's information, that the game is lost—Hamilton has it in hand and is sure to win."

Howard was a gentleman of the bull-dog type, and he retorted:

"If I lose my money, that is my affair, and I don't see how it can affect Hamilton or Hawthorn. The bet is made, the money is up and will remain up, so far as I am concerned, unless Noble backs down."

Turning to Hamilton, Howard said:

"What's the matter with you, Hamilton? I remember that it was only a few months ago that you had no objection to worshipping at the shrine of the fickle goddess. What change has come over the spirit of your dreams?"

"There is nothing the matter with me, nor am I dreaming. Yes, I was, as you say, only a few months ago a devotee at the altar of the Goddess Fortune, and I proved her—just as Sallust described her in his day—very fickle. I found that the rewards she bestowed upon me for my devotion were injurious morally, mentally, and socially; and I determined, then and there, to abandon her worship for all time. Others may do as they please, but I have found no reason to regret my determination."

"But you are not betting. Nobody is asking you to bet. You are simply forbidding others to bet."

"I am only objecting to others making me the subject of a bet—it having come to my knowledge. Others may bet as much as they please and it is

none of my business, but when it comes to making a betting machine of me, or making me the conduit of a bet, so to speak, I have a right to refuse being so used. It then becomes a matter of interest to me, and to that extent it becomes my affair. You are a lawyer, Howard. Suppose you intend to poison Hawthorn and come to me for the drug and I furnish it, knowing its use, am I not an aider and abettor, and equally guilty with the principal? Do I state the matter correctly?"

'Not as a lawyer would state it. But I catch your meaning, and it is applicable only to felonies. Now this issue between us is wholly moral and partakes in no sense of the legal."

"If you will analyze the principle, however, you will find it to be the same, whether the issue is moral or legal, and you know it. If I sit down here and play a game of draw-poker, refusing to bet myself, but permitting you to bet on me, and with all the cunning skill of the expert I win the money of the fleeced victim, — the money going into your pocket,—wherein am I better than you? But why discuss the question, as I am determined not to be made the subject of a bet when I know it."

"Howard," said Hawthorn, "one of two things is certain, either the bet is off or the game is off—take your choice."

"I am not willing to make myself a marplot at any time or under any circumstances," returned Howard. "I think Hamilton a little squeamish, but in deference to the wishes of the club I consent to the withdrawal of the stakes."

The game was resumed and Hamilton managed to increase his lead before the finish.

The flow of soul had flooded the channels of pleasure; the wine circulating had filled the glasses around Hamilton, but his remained untouched; the banqueting was drawing to a close; the hands on the dial showed near the midnight hour, when Hudson looked up and, as if surprised, exclaimed:

"Is anything wrong with your wine, Jack, that your glasses stand full? I hope the whiskey of the West has not spoiled your palate for good wine and the civilized things of the East."

"From the way it disappears among you fellows, Hudson, I would say the wine is all right and up to the latest edition of civilization."

"But I notice that yours still appears."

With the hope of making a diversion, Livingstone put in:

"I suppose, Hudson, you look upon old man Noah as a highly civilized gentleman. But the waiters are neglecting you—your glasses are empty and you had better have them filled."

"Livingstone, you are right. Noah was the leading man of his day, heading the list, and I honor the man that first planted a vineyard. I don't want my glasses filled. If full, they would be like Jack's, and that is the point of my objection."

"Not long," laughed Livingstone, "you would soon settle that point."

"Of the making of laws there is no end," interrupted Hawthorn; "but a few natural rights are

left us, and Hamilton is only exercising one of these natural rights."

But Hudson was slightly elevated with the wine he had drunk, and being of a cool temperament and a little obstinate in his disposition, he was not to be diverted, and replied:

"Partly right and partly wrong, Hawthorn. It is natural to take a little wine—for the stomach's sake, you know; but in my opinion Jack is not exercising this natural right."

"Just there, Hudson, you must allow me to put in my oar,' said Hamilton. "If you mean to say a taste for wine is natural, you are certainly mistaken. It is no more so than the taste for tobacco—both are acquired, as I can prove. Now, if you will only—"

"Hold, Jack," broke in Hudson, "hold. As much as I love you for a real jolly, good fellow, I do not think I can stand it. You are about to go off into one of your prosy, analytical, metaphysical abstractions that you call argument, and by way of good-bye it will leave a bad taste behind you. However, I am glad you said what you did. My governor, only this morning, went for me in fine style and more than hinted that I was a spendthrift, that I have a constitutional aversion to keeping any of the filthy stuff about me, and emphasized in an intimation that I am not calculated to acquire anything. What you said is very comforting to me, for it shows that the governor is laboring under a very serious mistake, and I have great respect for your opinion—when it agrees with my own. But all this

is no answer to my question—what's the matter with the wine?"

"Nothing is wrong with the wine so far as I know. But, to make myself understood beyond all doubt, if it were nectar fit for the gods I would refuse to taste it!" Hamilton spoke with strong emphasis.

"Gone into the total abstinence business, eh?" said Hudson. "It's the best joke of the season. Jack, you may be able to play the cherub out in Denver, but you forgot, old fellow, that here we all know you of old."

"Yes, you know the old Jack, but you seem not to know the new Jack."

"Old fellow, you had better be careful. It must be a spirited girl who will take it upon herself to handle the check-rein before the team is harnessed. Come, Jack, one glass at parting and to the memory of the good times we have had and to the days that are gone. Jack, it will never be heard of in Denver."

"If I made such a promise, Hudson, would it be honorable to break in—granting that the breach would never reach Denver?"

"Now you are trying to get up an argument again, but it's no go. That is an old trick of yours, but I have seen you play it too often to let you pull the wool over my eyes in any such dodging way. If you have made any such promise, I am sorry for you."

"Well, Hudson, I deserve your sympathy, for I have made just such a promise—but not to a girl."

"To whom, then, did you make it?"

"To myself, and it is no less binding."

"Pshaw! I make that promise every New Year's morning and break it before the set of sun. Howard will tell you it is without consideration, and, therefore, not binding."

"You should keep that promise, Hudson, as I shall keep mine. The consideration is beyond money purchase—honest manhood, increased self-respect, and favorable growth in the estimation of the general public."

"You are afraid of public opinion, are you?"

"Not at all, for I am now facing public opinion, upheld, as it is, by some of my dearest friends—and you know it."

Here Livingstone interrupted with: "Who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath redness of eyes?"

And Hawthorn, answering, said: "He that looketh upon the wine when it is red within the cup—when it moveth itself aright."

And Livingstone continued: "Who hath the headache next day?"

Hawthorn responded: "He that tarrieth long at the wine-cup overnight." Here the laughter became general, in which Hamilton joined, as he rose from the table, saying:

"Gentlemen, you are more familiar with the after effects than you are with the scripture passages that suggest moderation and enjoin temperance."

After they had reached their rooms, Hamilton said:

"Livingstone, my best of friends, are you not tired of the idle life you are living? Are you not weary of wondering in the morning how you will get through with the day? There is not much poetry, but there is a vast deal of truth in Longfellow's line, 'Life is real, life is earnest,' and I can assure you that we must live for some object and work for some purpose if we would escape from *ennui* and discontent. Of all men, he must be the most wretched and unhappy who drifts aimlessly upon the current of life and, like the brute, has merely an existence. He can never know that satisfaction of mind, that peaceful calm of the heart, that quiet restfulness of feeling that comes to the man who is working to a well-defined end and is conscious that he is making himself felt in the community in which he lives; that he is moving upon a plane higher than the herd around him; that he is contributing to the prosperity of the people, and that each day brings him nearer and nearer the accomplishment of his purpose and the object of his pursuit. The mind of man is a workshop in which the hammer of thought is unceasingly forging the fruits that mark our destiny. My friend, have you ever thought of these things?"

Livingstone was silent for a minute before he replied:

"You ask me if I have thought of these things, and I answer you—yes. I have thought of them until I grew sick at heart. It is humiliating to confess it, but it is true, that I have done nothing for myself; that I am simply existing upon what others

have provided; that I am abusing the advantages of birth, and permitting the gifts of nature to consume themselves with rust. In a word, of myself I am a nobody. I have never made a dollar. I have done nothing in the interest of my fellowman, nor anything in any way that could command his respect. But what can I do?"

"Do!" exclaimed Hamilton in the midst of his preparations for the night's rest, "why cut loose from your surroundings! You have been in the larvæ stage long enough! Cut through the cocoon that your idleness has woven around you and go forth to the battle of life! Enter upon the professional career for which you are so well fitted. You were with me in London and in Paris—you are not fond of the knife, but you are a fair operator, and you were conceded to be the best diagnostician of us all. There is the field for your talents. It is there that duty calls, and there can be no higher call. Not that you need the fees of the practitioner, for your income is large; but because no man has the right to bury his talents in a napkin, and because no man can establish character and develop manhood and enjoy the 'glorious privilege of being independent' who does not follow the work to which his individuality points. Try it, Livingstone, try it! It will make a man of you. But you will have to get away from your present environment. You will have to turn your back on the companions of your revelry and the fellowship of languid loungers who loll the day away. Can

you do it? If you can, come to Denver and enter into partnership with me. What say you?"

"Do you really mean it, Jack, or are you testing my willingness to try?"

"I mean every word of it. Come and test me as I am now testing you. Together I am sure we will make a success, for I know we are, in a large measure, the complement of each other."

"Your offer is more than generous, Jack, and I will think the matter over and let you hear from me," was Livingstone's remark as he stretched himself in bed.

The subject was not referred to the next morning until the handshaking in the good-bye, when Hamilton said:

"Sid, have you thought over the proposition I made you last night?"

"Yes, more than was conducive to sound sleep."

"What conclusions have you reached, if any?"

"I think I will run out to Denver and look over the place."

CHAPTER XVIII

Kate was at the depot and waiting for the train when it rolled into the city. There is always a sensational waste of hugging and kissing on such occasions, and the two girls seemed to have an unlimited supply on hand when they met. Hamilton stood with hat in hand, and as soon as opportunity offered he remarked to Kate:

"Miss Kate, I have been a faithful messenger. I delivered the message, and I now deliver the goods. What of the reward?"

Kate was smiling joyously as she answered:

"He was permitted to enter the Promised Land, I believe, which to you, in this instance, is stepping into the carriage and seeing Grace to the end of her journey—the Somers home.'

After seeing the girls to the Somers residence, Hamilton went directly to his office, where he found Dr. Blake. As he entered, the doctor sprang up, exclaiming:

"Here you are at last! May all the buttons fly from my trousers, with not a needle and thread within a thousand miles, and may I lose my wish to die and be in paradise, if I had not rather see you than to have met Jesse James when in the noontide of his glory and in all the splendor of his

arsenal array! In proof, here's my hand for a good old-fashioned country shake, which I assure you I would not willingly have given to the distinguished gentleman I have just named. I feel as frisky as a girl in her teens when she sees her sweetheart coming."

"My dear friend, you can't imagine how delighted I am to be at home once more and feel the honest clasp of your hand. It pays to be absent for a time when the return brings the hearty, unselfish welcome of a congenial friend. I would not forego that pleasure for the wealth of the Indies, and it—"

"Pish, Hamilton, there you go again on one of your gossamer themes! I was in hope that a little travel and a little mingling in society would free you from such sentimental vagaries. It seems I was mistaken. It may be that friendship did not have so much to do with my enthusiastic welcome as you seem to think. In fact, if you will carefully examine the apparently generous acts of others and their beautifully charitable doings, you will generally find a sediment of selfishness at the bottom. I know of but one business in which you are expected to live in castles in the air, bathe in perfumes, and feed on an aurora borealis—that is courting. Even then, if your girl has a taste for billing as well as cooing, I would advise you to become intensely practical—then go home and let the other fellow do the balance of the courting. You are too fond of riding a rainbow. Yes, I welcome you to this office—your home—and I rejoice

in the gladness your coming gives, because you must put on the harness that has been galling me, and I am permitted to go forth and recline at my ease beneath some wide spreading beech and look on and criticise your work and tell you how much better I could do it. I shall enjoy the luxurious privilege. Unselfish, indeed! Pooh!

"Now, having set you right, tell me about your trip. Did that innocent cherub that you call "uncle" really die, and did the fortune really materialize? Have you got possession of it? When did you get in, and did you bring Miss Grace Russell with you? As you are not a woman, you needn't answer all these questions at once—you can take your time."

As Hamilton answered, he was still laughing at the distressed look assumed by the doctor when speaking of his trials:

"Too much protesting on the part of the accused always strengthens the suspicion of his guilt. Who ever heard of the selfish man advertising his selfishness; of the dishonest man proclaiming his dishonesty, or the heartless man fulminating his brutality?

"I got here on the ten o'clock train—Miss Grace Russell came with me, and I delivered her to Miss Kate, who met us at the depot—my uncle is dead and buried—the fortune did materialize, and I have it in possession."

"Answered with the brevity and precision that always delight an honest man, but with a clearness that would destroy every chance of promotion in

the Cabinet, or State, or the diplomatic circle. I see you wear no crape on your hat for the old money mælstrom. Seeing this, it occurred to me that possibly the ferryman of the river Styx had refused him passage, fearing that the old cormorant would have a mortgage on his boat before he could reach the other side."

"Crape, doctor, will do among women, who, as a rule, are tender and sentimental, and who too often have too little to divert the train of thought that leads to the grave. Men are made of sterner stuff, or should be, and I have never had much respect for the signals of distress that call from the hat to the onlooker, amid the hurly burly of active life, to come and view the suffering of the grief-stricken wearer."

"And yet, Hamilton, there are many who do it. Well, well, Dives has gone to his reward, and now that you are in possession of all his worldly goods that he could not ferry over the river, what do you intend to do?"

"I shall continue to practice my profession with zeal and energy, as if dependent on it for a living."

"I am glad to see that your fortune has not addled your brains and that you are sensible to the last, as Pat's wife said to him when he was dying and giving his final instructions."

"If the joke fits the occasion, let it come, doctor."

"Well, it is not a side-splitting joke, but it popped into my head when you said you intended

to continue in the use of your brains and be of some service to society.

"When Pat was dying he called his wife to his bedside and said:

" 'Darlint, before Oi gives up and let you have the wake, Oi want to tell you that Tim Murphy owes us a dollar, and Oi wants you to lit him have no rist till he pays it.'

" 'My darlint Pat, you is sensible to the last. You can rist aisy, my darlint, and be shore Oi'll have it outen him or Oi'll spile his mug for him.'

" 'And, darlint, we owes Moike Malony one dollar, and you must be shore and pay Moike.'

" 'Oh, my darlint, my darlint, and now he's outen his moind and his sinses all gone.' "

"It may not be a side-splitter," said Hamilton, "but it points a moral, and that is better than adorning a tale. But tell me about your patients, as I must get into your cast-off harness."

"The patients are not so many, but their ills are legion. I will come back in the afternoon and drive round with you and take my last look at their tongues. Now I must go to Kate, who I know is in a state of nervous excitement, and fire at her a few ironical and irritating remarks by way of a sedative. And I want to meet Miss Grace before time for lunch. Of all social abominations, the most abominable is meeting at the table for the first time. The man is always stupidly awkward and the woman is most provokingly at her ease. By the way, I take it for granted that she is a high-roosting bird, and will expect me to be all style

and dignity, and smiles and affabilities, interlarding my conversation with classical allusions, scientific illustrations, and poetical quotations."

"You are much mistaken. She will expect no such rubbish. You will find her a sensible and a jolly girl—a girl after your own heart. You will find her full of fun and frolic, simple in her manners and unassuming in her deportment, thoroughly educated, but never mounting her stilts or riding a hobby. She has blood in her veins, and the social position of her family has been so long and so well established that she never gives it a thought, because she knows it cannot be questioned. She is rich without knowing it; too well educated to be pedantic; too refined to be aggressive, and too womanly to be obtrusive. You will find her simple and natural, whether talking to the city belle or the country girl, to the polished professor or to the untutored rustic."

The doctor looked at him with a smile of amusement and said:

"If I had known that you were so heavily loaded I would have been more careful in firing you off. You have given a partial list of her many charms, —of defects there are none,—and now I go to meet your paragon."

Late in the afternoon the doctor returned to the office, and as he saw Hamilton he called out:

"*Veni, vidi, vici,* that is what Grace can say. She told me to call her Grace in such a sweet and childlike way that I cannot resist—and, varying the message of the cheerful Perry, I have met the ene-

my and I am hers. By the way, in doing so, I am for one time in my life up to date, as variations seem to be the order of the day. I notice that Kate and her musical pals can play even Home, Sweet Home, with such a supply of variations that I cannot find anything left of the original article. Of course the melody of the music is destroyed, but, then, it is the *ton*—the prevailing fashion, and that makes it all right. I thought this morning that you were putting on the paint rather thick, but when I met her, like the Queen of Sheba, I found the half had not been told me. I tell you, old fellow, she will make the best piece of household furniture that I have met with in a long time. I want you to keep that fact in your memory. After the girls had taken what they call their siesta,—our dads called it an after-dinner nap and our mothers never had time to take one,—they came down, and for about three hours we were as frolicsome as three playful kittens. I haven't had such a good time since I was in my teens and went a picnicking, or berry-picking, or nut-hunting with my sweetheart. Too bad that age should put such luscious fruit beyond my reach. But hurry, Hamilton, hurry. I want to quickly finish the malodorous business we have on hand of visiting the sick and get back to the refreshing fragrance awaiting me in Eden. Talk about your paradise! Who wants a paradise more charming than a beautiful, blooming, luscious, frolicsome, mischief-making girl can create. It is good enough for me, if it would only last."

"Age has its advantages, Doctor, and she might consider it your strongest plea."

"What are you driving at now, Hamilton? I know you have a knife up your sleeve."

"Naturally, it might enable her to bury her regrets only the sooner. But come on—the team is waiting."

CHAPTER XIX

About two months had passed since Grace had come to Denver, and the time had been spent in agreeable amusements and merry festivities. Inez had united with Kate, assisted by Ada and Sue, and excursions, dances, parties, entertainments, sociables and receptions had followed each other in such order as not to fully satiate, but only pleasingly gratify, the desire for pleasure. On such occasions Dalzell, Van Tromp and Carson were always to be seen, but Hamilton was seldom in attendance. Now and then, when his duties would permit, he put in an appearance. He found that Dalzell had become attentive to Grace, and, so far as he could see, she had no objection to his seeming preference. He was ever hovering near her and she always had a smile for his coming. Hamilton knew the parties well. He knew Dalzell to be the perfect gentleman, cultured, and refined, incapable of misleading or showing a preference that he did not feel. He knew that Grace's nature was frank and open, without a tinge of coquetry, and it was with secret pleasure that he saw their growing interest in each other. He knew that Dalzell was not readily susceptible and that he had escaped the meshes of more than one ma-

neuvering mamma with a willing daughter. He knew that Grace had received offers, ranging from the impecunious European count up to the New York eligible, but he was satisfied that none of these offers had touched her heart—that she was still heart whole. He saw that Carson continued to hang around Kate and still attempt the role of proprietorship, but there was a hidden comfort in his heart as he noticed her occasionally wandering glance around the company present, her ready smile of recognition to the salutation of a friend, and her interested tone in replying to a passing remark.

The opportunity that Hamilton sought came in a way that he little expected, and was brought about by Inez, who had become his warm friend and partisan, and who, as elsewhere appears, had early suspected his secret inclinations. It occurred at an entertainment given by Mrs. Dalzell, when Inez and Hamilton, and Kate and Carson were standing together engaged in conversation. She pretended that she wanted to consult Carson about making up a party for an excursion to Colorado Springs, and asked him to go with her to the library and assist her in preparing the list. If Carson was anything, he was outwardly polite, and of course he went.

Returning after a time, Kate was nowhere to be seen, having gone out, at Hamilton's request, to view the lawn by moonlight. They found a rustic seat in a quiet and retired corner of the lawn, and for a time they talked upon general and indiffer-

ent subjects. They were tracing the constellations, when Hamilton suddenly exclaimed:

"Who says that all that multitudinous host came by chance?"

"Only the fool has said in his heart there is no God," answered Kate.

"Of the leaves that bedeck the forest," continued Hamilton, "no two are alike; of the flowers that bedeck the hills and the fields, the dales and the valleys, no two are alike, and of the millions of men that throng the earth, no two are alike. No sane mind, it seems to me, can consider all this wonderful mechanism the result of mere chance, for it must, to the thinking mind, point unerringly to a mighty Designer who is as infinite in His resources as He is infinite in His wisdom. Is each one of that starry host alive with the creatures of the Great Designer's handiwork? It must be so, in one form or another, for such wisdom cannot run to waste. Were they put there merely to gladden the view from this rolling mote of ours? Certainly not, for the telescope tells us of millions and millions that lie beyond human vision, and as the magnifying power grows and stretches farther and farther into the unfathomed abyss of space, other millions will unfold themselves. All immensity must be teeming with floating, shining orbs—and system after system and system upon system that light the vast and unknown void—all, the learned tell us, are sweeping in century flights, to the harmonious music of the spheres, around a central point somewhere in the mighty beyond. There, in

imagination, I can see the Great Designer sitting on His throne, viewing the wondrous whole, directing the workmanship of his hands and guiding orb after orb into the haven of eternity, when each shall have accomplished the purpose of its creation and when time shall be no more."

"And yet," said Kate, "there are people who would have us believe that all these wonders of which you have just spoken, and the laws controlling and governing them, are the creatures of chance—all a mere accident, so to speak."

"They tell you so in moments of egotistical delirium, but in their sober moments they neither believe it themselves, nor do they expect you to believe it. Chance is the creation of man and accident the fruit of his blunders—a pleasant fruit on occasion, since it was an accident that brought you and me together, and I thank you for making reference to it on the night I left for New York."

"Why should you thank me?"

"Because it breaks the seal of silence. Do you know that I have never ceased to admire the nerve you showed on that occasion?"

"How so? I am not sure I understand you."

"In submitting yourself to a stranger and to the care of a surgeon of whose skill you knew nothing."

"Your conduct was that of a gentleman, and I had your word for your skill."

"Yes, but I was a stranger to you, and therein you showed your nerve."

"You give me credit for nerve at the expense of

prudence and common sense—an equivocal compliment to say the least."

"Knowing that I could do all I professed, I confess I never looked at the matter in that light."

"Rather than have you look at it in that light, I must tell you that I knew Dr. Jack Hamilton."

"Impossible! How could you? We had never met."

"As you know, Grace was my room-mate and class-mate at Vassar. Before the eventful day—commonly called commencement day—one month is given to the graduating class to rest and make such preparations as each member may think essential to a proper display of her charms on that occasion. I spent the month with Grace in New York. During the month, Helen, Grace's sister and now Mrs. Schuyler, gave a musicale to which you and others were invited. Grace and I, not having gone through the miserable ordeal of a debut, belonged to the bread and butter class and we were remanded to the nursery. We were not permitted to enter the forbidden grounds, and, like most children, we spent the time in peeping. Of course I saw you and heard your barrytone singing which secured you an encore. In response you gave them Annie Laurie. So you see I knew what I was doing when, on the night of your first reception at my home, I assertively said you could sing and asked you to join me at the piano. Do you remember that I responded to the call with Annie Laurie?"

"Yes, I remember, but I did not suspect the reason."

"After I graduated and came home, I heard of you, now and then, through Grace, and among other things I heard that you had quite a reputation as a surgeon—when you could be persuaded to work."

"After all you say, I cannot see how you identified the stranger as Dr. Jack Hamilton."

"Well, when I recovered from the shock of the railroad wreck you were bending over the couch and watching me. Of course I recognized you as the man who had so cleverly managed the old clown on the train when he wanted to keep the window up and let the dust and cinders pour into the coach. But, like a flash, it came to me that I had elsewhere seen that face. There is an old maxim, all things come to them who wait. I would improve on that by saying, all things come to them who investigate. Finding that I was in possession of my senses, you quickly satisfied yourself as to my condition—gave some instructions to Mrs. Jones and left the room. When you had gone, I questioned her, and found that she neither knew you nor had she learned your name. She gave me some details in connection with the wreck, and in the course of her flow of words she happened to mention that your trunk was in the hall of the house. I told her to go out and see if she could find a name on the trunk. She did so, and reported—'Dr. Jack Hamilton, New York.' The name brought to memory the night of the musicale

at the home of General Russell, where I saw you and heard you sing—as I have already told you. So, as Uncle Gus would say—there you were and here you are."

"Still, you took the risk that there might be two of the same name and profession."

"No risk about it. You forget that I saw you at General Russell's and that I have just said that when I waked up and found you bending over me, that there was something familiar about your face."

"Well, we will waive the question of nerve," said Hamilton, laughing, "and I will concede that any one who submits to my care and management shows both prudence and common sense. Is that satisfactory."

"Quite so, but I cannot see that your premises warrant your conclusion. I will concede, however, that your conclusion is based on an abundant supply of self-confidence."

"Thank you. I suppose you know that self-confidence is one of the basic essentials to success. A man without it is always certain to fill an inferior station. Hence, it is not at all unusual to see mediocrity in high places and the truly intellectual far below, for the general public too often accepts a man at his own valuation. If you will look into the history of the men who have played a conspicuous part on the stage of life you will find they were self-confident and self-reliant. They went to the goal while the doubting and diffident stood hesitating at the starting post." He then added good-

humoredly, "I suppose you think my chances of success may be classed among the best."

"Don't forget that you said that—not I," replied Kate in the same humorous vein.

"But, going back to the wreck," said Hamilton, "why is it in all our pleasant social life you have made no reference to it, and how comes it that neither your father nor Dr. Blake has spoken of it? I have been much troubled at times, lest I unthinkingly did something objectionable in your opinion and which you are not disposed to forget."

"Nothing of the kind. Your conduct on that occasion was most courteous and gentlemanly and all that the most sensitive and refined person could have asked. As to my conduct at the time, I fear the only refuge left me is that of woman's whim, which, as you know, is beyond explanation—an inexcusable excuse. I looked upon you as merely passing through this section of the country and I had no thought of ever meeting you again. My fatal blunder was in not greeting you as sufferer and surgeon when I met you at the theater. Since then I have been eagerly anxious to make the *amende honorable,* as you men say, and tell you how deeply my behavior has humiliated me, and tender you my heartfelt apology. Father hasn't the slightest suspicion that you are the surgeon of the wreck, and I never told Uncle Gus until after you had gone to New York. Their excuses are good."

"You never told them;—and yet, it is said, a woman cannot keep a secret."

"That is only one of many slanders that we women have to bear from cynical bachelors. I know women, and not a few, to whom that slander can have no application. So far as I am concerned, I somewhere read that only the fool could expect the breast of another to keep the secret which his own breast could not keep—I have profited by it."

"I suppose Dr. Blake was much surprised when he heard the facts, and thought, perhaps, that I ought to have told him."

"Surprise is not the word for his burst of indignation. However, he held you blameless, saying it was impossible for you, as a gentleman, to speak of it until I gave you permission by first speaking of it myself. But he abused me and lashed me with his tongue until he actually made me cry. Then he abused himself for not having recognized your work. Having abused himself to his heart's content, he turned on me and was about to convert himself into a kicking machine, when he bethought himself of the great respect he has for the clothes I wear, and—desisted."

Hamilton laughed as he said: "I can see him now, swelling with apparent indignation and stormily threatening, as if he were a cyclone of destruction. He is always bubbling over with affection for you, and his tenderness is sometimes touching."

"I can give you the secret of it in part, only you must not forget that it is a family secret. He was engaged to be married to my father's only sister

and she died a few days before the nuptials were to take place. She was in her twentieth year when she died, and I never saw her, but I was named for her, and I am said to be very like her in character and in person. When he came to live with us he asked me to call him Uncle Gus. I have always done as he requested and I dearly love him, but I sometimes think he loves me more for what he sees of the past reappearing in me than for myself."

"I am glad," said Hamilton, "that you have told me this family secret, for it enables me the better to understand the gentleness of his character, and the knowledge will prevent me, even in jest, from making intimations that might give pain to a heart that is wearing a sorrow's crown of sorrow."

"I understand you. You need not hesitate to joke him, for he enjoys it to the full, and he knows how to grow old gracefully—a rare gift. And, then, I suppose it is pleasant to feel that others think you could if you would. Of all sad lots that befall us in this life, the saddest, it seems to me, is to realize that the opinion of others retires you from the activities of life, that nothing is left for you but to sit down and await the coming of death. I can think of no greater cruelty that could be inflicted on the old. We ought to make them happy while we can, and make sunshine around and about them till death comes to claim them—it will not be long.

"But there is nothing stagnant about Uncle Gus. He will never grow old. His is a fortunate dispo-

sition. He is full of fun—he must have his jokes; he keeps pace with and takes an interest in every passing thing. He will die young should he reach an hundred years."

"Sorrows soften," said Hamilton, "and the shadows of life are sent that we may more fully appreciate the sunshine when it comes. Our conversation has dispelled the shadows that hung around the railroad wreck. We understand each other now and—all's well that ends well."

"But the end is not yet, my surgeon," said Kate, good humoredly. "I am your debtor. Send in your bill and I will see that you get the reward of your services."

Hamilton hesitated for several minutes and then said:

"Miss Kate, I have no bill for services rendered at the railroad wreck. But I lost something on that occasion which you still have in your possession and keeping. I do not ask you to return it, for you could not if you would. I only beg that you will consider my loss and that you will entertain the thought of replacing it in kind." His voice was low and tense and laden with magnetic earnestness.

"Here comes Inez," exclaimed Kate, springing to her feet, "and I know she is looking for me."

The interruption did not put Hamilton in a frame of mind suitable for a Sunday-school address. He kept his seat until Inez was only a few feet away, and then rose to receive her. Coming up, Inez said:

"Kate, mother is searching for you and says she must see you before serving the refreshments. You will find her on the back porch waiting for you."

As Kate walked away, Inez turned to Hamilton and said:

"Doctor Hamilton, you may have read or heard, I know your mother told you, that we must return good for evil. So I shall expect you to be very attentive to me and entertaining as we stroll to the front gallery."

When they reached the stoop, Hamilton found his office boy waiting for him with a note. The note was as follows:

"Dear Jack:

Got here on the evening train—went to hotel—satisfied the inner man—came to your rooms—found you absent—took possession—office boy indignant—said something about calling the police—a tip wreathed his face with smiles and satisfied him of my rights—I forgave him. In a little while an old party came in—had seen him at the hotel—evidently a stranger—said he was on his way to Manitou—wherever that is—was a great sufferer—had been advised to consult Dr. Hamilton. I saw my chance—there is a tide—clothed myself with Hamiltonian dignity—called up a far-away prophetic look of inspired wisdom—listened to a long tale about awful pains—a plain case of cystitis — prescribed — pocketed a fee of twenty dollars—old party went on his way rejoicing—partnership opens auspiciously. Don't let this

note disturb you in your love-making—take your time—you run the business at that end of the line and I will run it at this end—you may get killed at that end—I may kill the other fellow at this end—we all have to learn—will know better next time. Yours at this end of the line.

"SID."

Inez had waited while he read, and seeing the smile on his face as he finished reading, she said:

"Now you are yourself again. That note must bring pleasant tidings."

"They are most pleasant, and I intend that you and the writer shall become friends—I will let you read the note."

He handed the note to her. She read it and returned it to him laughing, and saying:

"*Multum in parvo*. The writer must be something of an original. I have heard Grace speak of him and, from what she says, he must be a most delightful companion. But what jargon you doctors do use. Now I haven't the slightest idea what ails the old party, as the writer calls him. It may be something loaded with death or it may be only a pimple on his nose."

Hamilton was much amused at her criticism, and said:

"When you are the wife of a doctor I know he will take great pleasure in familiarizing you with the jargon of the profession. And now I must say good night. Please say good night to your mother for me and couple it with my regrets at leaving so early."

"Shall I say the same to Kate for you?"

"To her it will be unexpected. You can do as you please."

Inez looked after him as he went through the lawn, and said:

"What idiots some men can make of themselves."

CHAPTER XX

Hamilton declined to make one of the Colorado Springs party. The seeming eagerness of Kate to meet Inez on the night of the Dalzell entertainment had given him quite a shock. As in duty bound, he went with Livingstone to the Somers home, but he was careful to leave Livingstone to be entertained by Kate, while he directed his conversation to Grace. Kate was cordial and pleasant, and tried, more than once, to make the conversation general, but without success. She found Achilles sulking in his tent and she was forced to let him alone. When he was taking his leave the girls united in begging him to join the Springs party—Kate suggesting, in a humorous way, that an outing might dispel the gloom of his bachelor rooms.

He was not responsive, however, and firmly but courteously declined, saying that Livingstone and he had too much business for either of them to leave the city.

When left to themselves, Grace turned to Kate and asked:

"Kate, what is the matter with Dr. Hamilton?"

"*Cara Mia,* what a very foolish question! How should I know? He may have lost a night's sleep

or he may be suffering from an attack of indigestion."

"No such thing! I haven't seen him since the night at the Dalzells, when he was not disposed to talk to anybody but you. To-night he prefers to talk even to me—to anybody—rather than to you, and I know something must have gone wrong between you two. Kate, you are not my old roommate if you don't tell me, after I have come more than a thousand miles to show how much I love you."

"Really, Grace, I have done nothing to bring about an estrangement between Dr. Hamilton and myself."

"I don't know what you have done, Kate, but the estrangement has come and you know the cause. So out with it, for I intend to know. And, just to think, I have been telling you all about Mr. Dalzell and myself because I love you and because I thought you had no secrets from me. Kate dear, if you love me you will tell me."

"Oh, you would not have been so free with your affair only you had to make inquiries to gather certain information that you wanted about Mr. Dalzell. Love me, indeed! Necessity made you communicative."

"No such thing, you piece of perversity. After I had been here a month I knew all about Mr. Dalzell, or as much as there was any necessity of knowing, and it is only since that time that I have had any secrets to communicate. You had just as well

begin, Kate, for I intend, sooner or later, to have it out of you—the sooner the less trouble."

"Well, if I must, I must. So here goes with the little that I know—you will be surprised that there is so little of it."

Kate then told her everything that had taken place on the lawn the night of the Dalzell party. When she had finished, Grace laughed and laughed again.

After looking at Kate in a quizzical way, she exclaimed:

"Was there ever such a pair of simple simpletons! Why, Kate, he was feeling his way by means of an indirect proposal to a direct proposal. He had given you his heart and was asking for yours."

"Oh, yes, I understood all of that well enough, and I thought I knew what was coming. But, you see, Grace, I didn't feel that I was exactly ready for it, and the appearance of Inez just at that time was most opportune and a great relief to me."

"What do you mean by not being exactly ready?" said Grace, still laughing.

"Well, I don't suppose any woman ever was in just such a fix. I knew I was not willing to say *no*, and I did not feel that I was willing to say *yes*," was Kate's rather doleful answer.

"Had he given you no intimation? Did he take you by surprise? I never suspected that he is a man for forced marches in love affairs."

"He had given some intimations that led to that line of thought."

"You have had other lovers and you have had other men to address you, I think?"

"Yes, you know I have. But, Grace, somehow, or in some way, this was so different. The fact is, Grace, I became confused, and I may have shown a too willing greeting to Inez."

"Yes,' said Grace, still laughing, "this time was different from the other times. You were interested this time, and that made the difference. It was the same old story that Adam whispered in the ear of mother Eve,—the lingering benediction that has come down to us from the Garden of God's planting,—which has been told and retold through all the centuries, which only grows the fresher and the sweeter for the telling, converting the heart into a blissful Eden and all the world, for the time being, into a blooming paradise. It was, however, your apparently too willing welcome to Inez that wounded him. He thought it showed a desire on your part to avoid all further conversation on the momentous question. And, yet, I don't see how you could have done otherwise, only you need not have been quite so demonstrative, and he ought to know that the presence of Inez must have put a stop to his heart's unfolding. He hasn't properly weighed the fearful effect produced by the presence of the terrible *third* on such occasions—a snow plunge is a hot bath when compared with the polar *third*.

"Of all the fools, the biggest and most sensitive fool is the strong, brainy man when entangled in Love's meshes. He quickly goes to pieces and

flounders on to the end. It is the shallow-pated society swell that goes through with colors flying, with all the ease and grace of a gull skimming the waters. Every woman is a new revelation to the busy, brainy man, and he will never learn that they are all just about alike—that when a woman intends to say *no* she never gets excited; that she never gets confused when she is indifferent, and that confusion and excitement are evidences of interest. Well, we are told that Cupid is a boy, and I suppose it would be unseemly for the Leviathan to join in the sports of this mischief-maker. Well, dearie, whether you know it or not, you are in love with Dr. Hamilton, and you are going to marry him, just as I am in love with Mr. Dalzell and intend to marry him. We are all going to live here in Denver and you and I are going to be as happy and as jolly and as frolicsome as we were in the days of our girlhood. I intend to lend a helping hand to your affairs and it will not be long before I straighten out the kinks."

"No," said Kate, "you must do nothing of the kind. You must let things drift along and take their own course"

"Certainly I will, you ninny, only I shall direct the currents and have them drift my way. It is woman's art to do that and never be suspected. To appear artless is the perfection of art, and that is woman's special sphere."

Livingstone, in company with Hamilton, had called upon the Dalzells, and soon found himself launched upon the sea of society. He was sur-

prised and delighted, and, talking with Hamilton, said:

"Why didn't you tell me about the splendid women you have out here in the West? I have never found more of beauty, or more of culture, or more of refinement in the Paris salon, the English drawing-room, or the American parlor than I find here."

"And why not?" asked Hamilton. "They have every advantage that money and schooling and traveling can give, and many of them can trace themselves back to the best blood in this or any other country. Further, since the days of Troy, I have never heard of any place that had a monopoly of beauty."

"I hardly know why not," answered Livingstone, "only in the East we are inclined to attach crudeness and rusticity to everything in the West."

"Yes, I was once afflicted with that provincial disease. But tell me, Sid, which one of these beautiful and attractive girls most impresses you?"

"Well, I never knowingly poach upon another man's preserves, so we will say nothing about Miss Kate"—here Hamilton protested, but Livingstone went on as if he had not heard him. "Miss Ada is such a piquant, tantalizing little magnet that I sometimes hardly know whether it is best to fall in love with her or to avoid her. Miss Sue is a little too self-possessed and argumentative for me—she ought to marry a college professor."

"And what about Miss Inez?"

"Well, Jack, she is a very charming woman,

and the more I see of her the more her charms grow upon me. I am not sure but that she is the most brilliant woman that I ever met."

"You must be careful in that quarter, Sid, for she has the blood of the Spanish grandee in her veins, and you know that will not admit of trifling."

"Pshaw! A man can permit himself to bask in her smiles and enjoy her conversational corruscations without being accused of trying to trifle with her. As our old friend Horace would say, *Carpe diem;* and I can follow his philosophy if I am dense to his lyrical flow."

"Our old friend Horace also said *Festina lente,* and, as I just now intimated, she is to be captured by siege rather than by escalade."

"Who is thinking of capturing! I am only enjoying the present. The notes of the singing bird are sweeter when floating from the tree tops than they are when coming from the cage."

CHAPTER XXI

In correspondence with Hamilton before Livingstone came to Denver an agreement had been reached to build a private hospital. They had ample means and determined that it should be as complete as money could make it, with all modern advantages and the most perfect appointments. Subject to Livingstone's approval, when he came, Hamilton had selected an elevated site in the suburbs of the city. From this site there was a magnificent stretch of hill and dale, of valley and mountain, spreading to the view. Plans for the building had been agreed upon, and their professional duties, coupled with the pushing of the enterprise, left them with little leisure for social pleasures.

In the meantime, the party for the Springs had materialized, and had gone. What this party saw, or heard, or did, is unknown, except so much as Grace told in a letter which she wrote to her sister, Helen, and which she read to Hamilton and Livingstone before sending it.

"Dear Helen:

"We have just returned from Colorado Springs and the country lying around and about. By we, I mean Kate and myself, Messrs. Dalzell

and Carson. We have returned a little sun-stained, but overflowing with health and vigor. We spent two weeks in the midst of the grandest scenic panorama to be found in the world. Do you ask me for a description? It cannot be given. Can words convey the thrill or the melody of the music, or language the sweetness or the inspiration of the song? You may say here is the billowy hill and there the verdant dale—here is the silvery cascade and there the deepening gorge—here is the leaping cataract and there the mighty cañon—all these you may try to picture on the tablets of the mind, but you are not conscious of the grandeur that intoxicates the brain—you cannot feel the sublimity that elevates the soul and enables it to escape from its prison walls and go out and mingle with the grand panoramic vision. Can you catch the perfume from the description of the flower? Can you realize the battle from a picture of the field? Where is the scream of the fife and the roll of the drum—the call of the clarion and the blast of the bugle—the sheen of the uniform and the glitter of the bayonet—the rifle's volley and the cannon's thunder—the long lines swinging into battle's magnificent array? But you are laughing at me. She is enthused, you say. Well, I will dismount from my Pegasus and be practical—that's my forte, you know. But you have my idea—description fails. You must come and see, and the scene will linger with you ever after — a cherished and a living memory.

"Colorado is a wonderful State and a State of

wonders. It is as large as all New England, with New York thrown in for good measure, and more than half of all this domain is filled with mountains that pile themselves up against the sky. It must have been the home of the Titans in the long ago. As you know, we are indebted to the Spaniards for the name, and it means—red. I never suspected the reason until I came here and looked upon the rocks which are red—when they are not gray. Standing in the depths of some of the cañons and looking up, you will see its rock walls of a dull, rich red color—like to that you sometimes see in the stained glass in cathedral windows. The spires that you see in the Garden of the Gods are red, and so are the giant pillars of its gateway as you go out to the plain. Here I am in *medias res,* as if I were following the advice of Horace.

"I will go back and begin at the beginning. Colorado Springs is situated about sixty miles to the south of Denver and easily accessible. It is a city of some thirty thousand people, a summer resort, and nestles near the base of Pike's Peak in the midst of beauty and grandeur. It is a beautiful city—well shaded, and may be regarded as a sort of port of entry to the celebrated Manitou Springs. You can see one place from the other across a plain of about four miles in extent. You find first-class hotels and boarding-houses, and roads, and trolley lines, and magnificent drives to your heart's content. Manitou cannot be excelled as a watering place. It is situate in a V-shaped notch, just where the plain (mesa) ends and the mountain begins.

There are nine springs—all cold mineral water. Four of them are soda springs or effervescent. The water of these springs might be mistaken for Apollinaris water, and I am surprised that some enterprising Yankee is not in possession, bottling the water and selling it as Apollinaris. The remaining springs have iron in them and are known as the iron springs.

"To the south of Manitou are two cañons, known as North and South Cheyenne cañons. In the latter is a famous cascade that falls five hundred feet in seven leaps. Its beauties are indescribable. Looking down into the depths of the cañon, it would seem as if you might hold converse with the Chinaman on the other side. I also visited the other cañon, and it was here that I joined the donkey brigade; that is, I rode a donkey, here and there, to various scenic points hidden among the pines. There was a goodly number of us—all mounted on donkeys. We were a jolly, joking, jesting party and fun was the order of the donkey brigade. You never get tired, or if you do you never know it, and lassitude is unknown. The tonic of the atmosphere has much the same effect as old wine. Not far from Manitou is the Garden of the Gods, with its towering pillars of obelisk form carved out by the winds of the centuries. At the gateway of the Garden, on either side, perpendicular red columns rise some three hundred feet above the mesa or plain. Of the beauty of the place and its surroundings, you can have no conception—you must come and see

for yourself. But I cannot go into particulars, for I have neither time nor strength. Near at hand you will find Crystal Park, Red Cañon, Cave of the Winds, and many other surprises and wonders. Besides these, the whole country is sprinkled with nooks and corners, cascades and waterfalls, caves and dale-dots of great beauty and absorbing interest—the homes of Cupids and fairies, and of sprites and elves. But for the ocean voyage, it is folly to cross the continent for scenery. I have seen all that there is to be seen, and I tell you that in all Europe there is nothing that can surpass the beauty and grandeur that enwraps this country.

"During the two weeks of sight-seeing we went to the summit of Pike's Peak. It is a thrilling but delightful trip, and here we put in the days of greatest interest. The peak dominates everything with its silent, quiet majesty. A few years ago it was dangerous and almost impossible to reach the top of this massive monster, but now you can go all the way by rail. Think of it! A railroad climbing to the height of more than fourteen thousand feet up a mountain! It is an engineering feat rivaling that of the pyramids, and would have been laughed at by the old engineer. It is known as the Cog Road, peculiarly built, costly, but safe as any road running on the plains. I am told that the road is so constructed that the train can be stopped in a space of twelve inches.

"As the train goes crawling up along the mountain, from one side of the coach you can look down into immeasurable depths, and far below you may

see something that looks like the delicate tracery of lace-work—all torn and tangled, sinking and swelling, among the distant tops of the far-away pines. Helen, it is the heavenward side of a tinted cloud with its sunlit face. From the opposite window you can look up to seemingly immeasurable heights, as you go climbing and winding around the supports to the skies. If the foolish people of the genetic biblical days had only come here they would have found the tower already built, and we would have been spared the confusion of tongues and the dull drudgery of studying them. It would have been such a relief! But here we are at the Summit House on the top of the Peak, and we find all the comforts that the weary traveler can desire.

"I have also visited the celebrated Loop, considered by many the enginering feat of the age. It is only a day's journey from Denver, and to make it you must go through Clear Creek Cañon—a place of renown. Leaving Denver, you come to a place called Golden, a rugged mountain town. Soon after you leave this place you come to a surprising contrast—a prairie country and almost perfectly level, supposed to have been the bottom of a great lake or sea in the ages that are gone. Crossing this prairie land, you rush unexpectedly into Clear Creek Cañon, which opens on the plain. The walls of this cañon are red, and here and there they come so near together that, in looking upward, you can see only a ribbon of light hundreds of feet above. It takes about two hours to pass through these tow-

ering walls. At length you come to Idaho Springs, almost as celebrated as those of Manitou. You next come to Georgetown—another mining town —and beyond Georgetown is the famous Loop. You may talk about your shoes, horse shoes, mule shoes, or any other kind of shoes—about your curves and your angles, but none of them can equal the Loop. Its intricacies and windings are beyond the imagination of the old engineer. It doubles and it curves, and it twists and it coils, as it climbs the mountain. You can look from the window of your coach and see five tracks, like so many glittering snakes twining and coiling about the mountain, all below you and over which you have just passed. This engineering wonder is at a height of ten thousand feet. I know nothing about engineering and care less, and I only went because everybody in Denver asks, 'Have you seen the Loop?' and if you haven't been to see the Loop you are a back number.

"Well, I shall stop sight-telling, for I am conscious that I fail in the telling; but when I get home I shall sketch a few pictures for you that will quicken your curiosity and awaken a desire to come and see the originals for yourself.

"Now for some private matters that we can both understand."

* * * * * * *

"The impersonal," said Hamilton, "has been very interesting, and I have no doubt that the personal will be more so. Go on—we promise not to tell."

"Don't imagine for a moment, my dear Doctor,

that I have been reading for your entertainment. Of course it is a matter of moonshine to you. We tried to get you to go with us, but because of some fancied feeling no scenic prospect or promise of pleasure could tempt you from your tent, where, like a bear with a sore head, you preferred to remain and growl and sulk and suck your paws. I did think, however, that my old friend, Dr. Livingstone, would appreciate it and have a word of comment—but he is dumb."

"I was only waiting," said Livingstone, "to get my breath which your mellifluous words in depicting the grand scenery had—"

"Come, my friend," interrupted Grace, "you had better lower your flight or, like Icarus, your classic predecessor, you will find your waxen wings melting, and instead of falling into the Aegean you will go tumbling into a sea of bathos. Trying to begin at the top has been the downfall of many a man."

Livingstone laughed and Hamilton put in:

"I fear my going would not have added to the pleasure of the party. I would have been an odd number, and number three is always in the way."

"I will not assert that you would have added to the pleasure of the party, for that depends upon how far one can forget himself in a desire to please others. Selfishness is Argus-eyed and the all-conquering enemy, not only of pleasure, but even of comfort. But I will assert that, in all probability, the party would have added to your pleasure. There is nothing like mingling with others to rid

ourselves of fancied ghosts, and I thought you knew, since the days when you fondled your Homer, that sulking does not lead to victory."

"Miss Grace, you will have to make your meaning plainer if I am to understand you. You are talking in enigmas and I never solved one in all my life."

"As I am not good at making them, we will drop the subject. I am sorry, however, that you did not go with us, and I know that you would have enjoyed yourself, for it was a free and easy party and everything was communistic. You would not have been the horrible *third* that you imagine. Suppose, for instance,—it is only a supposition, you know,—that Mr. Dalzell and I had found ourselves in some quiet, cozy corner, and that he was whispering sweet somethings, or sweet nothings, in my ear and you had made your appearance, I can assure you I would have met you with a ready greeting. My welcome would have been diplomatic, if not genuine, and its heartiness would have given no offense to Mr. Dalzell, because his common sense would have told him that his sweet sayings must end with your presence; and, further, that he would soon have time and opportunity to try the bon-bon business again if he desired." She hesitated a little and then added, "Hector, you know, was formidable only in the absence of Achilles."

Hamilton looked searchingly at her and remarked:

"I think I read your riddle and at some time I will give you the answer."

"Don't forget that I am going home next week."

Livingstone began to laugh and said:

"I admit that I am not able to unriddle the riddle, but I do believe that Aurora is beginning to fleck the east with her tints and that I have become the horrible *third.*"

Kate, coming in just at this time, Hamilton remarked, as if pursuing a previous conversation:

"Miss Grace, you have been telling us about your mountain scenery and your cañons with their cathedral tinted walls, your dashing cascades and your leaping cataracts, but you have not told us anything of your companionship—not a single *bon mot,* or brilliant pun, or bright saying on the part of the men, or the sparkling wit of the women in repartee. I know at times the air must have been full of shooting stars and glowing meteors. Come, tell us something about these."

With one corner of her eye on Hamilton, Grace demurely answered:

"About the only thing worthy of remark was Mr. Carson's aggressive attentions to Kate."

Kate retorted, and the girls began good humoredly and teasingly to tell on each other. The men were much amused, and the conversation soon broadened out into general entertainment. In this vein it continued to flow until it was interrupted by Dr. Blake, who came in laughing, saying:

"Here, let me relieve you sanitarians from the drowsy wit of these feminine feather-weights. You

know Tim Murphy, Hamilton? Tim is an athlete and handy with his fists. As I was coming home along Senate street I heard a voice ahead of me that I thought I knew. Quickening my step, I soon came up to the owner, and found Tim bucking and fighting with two of his fellow-countrymen in the good old Irish way. Of course the police were somewhere else, deaf to all noise and buried in the contemplation of their own greatness. As I came up, Tim sent his left into the face of one of them and his head into the stomach of the other. It was done so quick that it seemed a single movement. The work was effective—both the men went down. As I came on deck, the fellows were scrambling for their feet, and I shouted for the police. They seemed to know what feet were made for, and in a twinkling they were out of sight. I turned to congratulate Tim on his work, and found that he was equally well informed—he had disappeared. As I came home I was thinking over the affray, and it brought to mind a city of some commercial importance and caused me to laugh as I came up the stoop. The question is, what is the name of the city suggested by the affray? Everybody give it up? What city could it suggest but Tim-buc-too?"

'Timbuctoo?" said Grace; "why, it is an African town of no import, and you spoke of it as a city of commercial importance."

"I shall not join issue with you on the import question; it was the export side of the question that I was considering."

Livingstone laughed, and said:

"He brightens with friction. Rub him again."

"I believe he is drawing on his imagination. Tell me of its exports?"

"Gold, of which you stand in no need; salt, of which you have an abundance, and gum, of which you never had enough."

"You are mistaken—I have always eschewed gum. Well, of all the preposterous efforts at wit, this of yours rather excels."

"Oh, Sidney Smith and Douglas Jerrold were in the larvæ stage for wit and humor when compared with Uncle Gus."

He gave no attention to Kate's interjected remark, but looking at Grace and putting his hand to his ear as if listening, he said:

"Methinks I heard the sound of word playing. Preposterous, is it? Pre and posterous. The cart before the horse, eh? The before should come after. Well, Grace, it depends upon the viewpoint. I looked at the affray from Tim's side—Tim-buc-too. But if you look at it from the side of his two assailants, you are right—Too-buc-tim."

When they were bidding the girls good night, Hamilton said to Grace:

"Will you drive with me to-morrow afternoon, or would you prefer to exercise on horseback?"

"Thank you; I prefer to drive. In fact, I am not as good a horsewoman as Kate, and I am just a little afraid of her thoroughbred."

CHAPTER XXII

When Hamilton and Livingstone had gone, Grace went to her room for the purpose of writing and letting her sister, Helen, know the day of her return to New York. After she had gone, the doctor asked:

"Kate, have you ever talked the railroad accident over with Hamilton?"

"Yes, he brought the subject up himself, just as I expected and just as I told you he would do. We went over the accident in detail soon after his return to Denver. As I promised you I would do, I made the *amende honorable.*"

"Well, you seem to hang fire. Go on and tell me how."

"By talking to him and telling him how sorry I was about the course I had pursued and asking his forgiveness."

"I can't see where the excuse for such conduct gets in, but of course he had to be polite and grant all that you asked. I suspect, however, he found himself in a predicament like that to which my friend, Jim Rudd, found himself when he courted his sweetheart."

"How was that, Uncle Gus?"

"Jim had been scraping his wing around his

girl for a long time, and he fancied she had no objection to hearing the sound thereof. In fact, Jim imagined that she enjoyed and encouraged the business. So he fed her on hints, innuendoes, cool drinks, and bon bons, until he had every reason to believe that he was clearly understood and that the time for asking the all-important question had come, and, further, that it was expected. He fired his question. She was so overcome with surprise that it took her several minutes to recover her breath—she had never dreamed of such a thing—she had never suspected that he regarded her in other light than that of a sister—she had always loved him as a brother—she had been misunderstood and she was so sorry; and wound up the long list of her surprises, regrets, and sorrows by saying:

" 'Mr. Rudd, if in any way I have thoughtlessly and unintentionally wronged you or misled you, will you not forgive me and still be my friend?'

"And Jim added, when telling me about it, 'And what in the devil's name could I say but yes?' "

"I am afraid your friend, Jim, was a soft snap," said Kate, laughing.

"It is my observation," replied the doctor, "that the hardest of us grow soft when we come under the influence of a pretty and clever woman."

"But your friend, Dr. Hamilton, was not so soft, for he didn't seem to be altogether satisfied."

"So you think you have found an exception; but, Kate, you forget that I said the woman must be

pretty and clever. If he was not satisfied, what more did he want?"

"He threw out a hint or two that might mean one thing or might mean another thing, but he never did say, in so many words, just what he did want. Finally it occurred to me that he might be thinking of his fee, and I told him if he would present his bill for services rendered he would receive a responsive check."

"Impossible, Kate, under the circumstances. A Hottentot would have had a better appreciation of the proprieties and more respect for Hamilton's feelings!"

"All the same, that is just what I told him, and I fail to see that it is either improper or rude to offer to pay a doctor for services rendered. I know you doctors aspire to move upon a very high plane—that you claim that your profession is not a matter merely of business or making a living—that there is much of the *pro bono publico* in it, but you have never prevailed upon anybody to believe it and you never will. This ethical claim is the broadest of farces. We all know that you are engaged in your profession for what there is in it—as a means of making a living; and I have yet to hear one of your brotherhood declining a fee for services rendered."

"Kate, if you would attend the State convention of doctors at its next session I have no doubt you would gain some notoriety and make a reputation; provided that body would listen to your harangue upon the ethics and business methods of the pro-

fession. But I don't intend to be switched off the main line and left standing on the side track of your ethical and business rails. You can't succeed in such a shallow and transparent trick. Surely, Kate, you did not so far forget yourself as to propose to pay Hamilton for his services at the railroad wreck? I cannot believe it! Come, tell me you did not do it!"

There was a low laugh, and Kate said:

"Uncle Gus, there are some things that I had rather talk about with you than with father. You seem to understand me better and enter more fully into my feelings, and what I am going to tell you must keep to yourself. Now, Dr. Hamilton did not seem to be offended in the least when I made the suggestion that you so severely condemn. Indeed, he seemed to take it very kindly, and gave me to understand—mind you, he did not say it in so many words, but he gave me to understand—that the fee he wanted for his services on that occasion is the patient rather than her money. There, now, Uncle Gus, I did say it, but it is getting late and I can't stay here to quarrel with you about my Hottentot ways. Good night, Uncle Gus, and may angel dreams bring you good humor with the morning."

"Stop, Kate, stop! Stop, I say, and tell me all about it!"

But Kate did not stop, and the doctor could hear the sound of her flying feet mingling with her laughter as she ran up the staircase to her room.

Leaning back in his chair, he had a hearty laugh as he mentally put the question:

"Who would have thought that bundle of calico and mischief was merely amusing herself and having her fun at my expense? Well, I am glad of it. Hamilton is the best man I know, and he is almost worthy of Kate—not quite; as to that, I don't know any man that is worthy of her.

"Now, if Danzell can only manage to place a mortgage on Grace, succeed in sucessfully foreclosing it and bring her to live here, we will not only have a 'hot time in the old town to-night,' but we will have it all the time. The thought of it almost makes me feel young again and reconciles me to a long lease of life. Well, I am very much obliged to Kate if she did give me the news in her own prankish and teasing manner, and if I had to punish her for her fun-loving, merry-making ways I don't know whether I would prefer to strangle her with hugging or to smother her with kisses. But even youth must have a little rest—so here goes for a round with old Morpheus, and may he soon put me to sleep."

CHAPTER XXIII

It was a pleasant afternoon, and when Hamilton reached the Somers residence he found Grace ready and waiting for his coming. The drives were in splendid condition, and soon they were bowling along at a rapid rate, for Hamilton knew how to handle the lines and bring out all there was in a horse.

"How did it happen that I found you ready and waiting for me? Did you mistake the hour, Miss Grace, or have you ceased to be fashionable?"

"To meet an appointment is a mere matter of business, and I was ready because I did remember the hour."

"When will you leave for New York?"

"I shall leave next Wednesday. Only four more days of Denver, where I have spent three of the happiest months of my life, for much of which I am indebted to you and for which I now sincerely thank you."

"The day that you leave will be a black-letter day for me, and I am almost tempted to ask you to come back and make your home in Denver."

"Come, Doctor, none of that, for more reasons than one. In the first place, you don't really mean

it, and in the second place the time has gone by when I could entertain such a proposition and I have good reason to think you know it—otherwise the intimation would not have been given—you knew you were safe in making it."

"What do you mean when you say the time has gone by?"

"Oh, well, I mean that if you had made a proposition of that nature three years ago, when you ranked, perhaps, as the leading eligible in our New York set and when you were heart whole and I was heart free, I have no doubt I would have taken it under serious consideration. But, as I said, that time has gone by, for you are no longer heart whole and I am no longer heart free."

"Am I to understand that you expect to return to this city?"

"Yes, after Kate has made me a visit to my home."

"Miss Grace, are you not evading my question?"

"No, I am not, and to prove to you that I am not, I am ready and willing to exchange confidences with you. What say you?"

"I have so little to tell that I am afraid the agreement would be what the lawyers call *nudum pactum.*"

"I don't know much about such questions, but if I am correctly informed I only have the right to raise that question and I am not going to do it. Besides, in making that assertion, you are unjust to yourself and your well-earned character for frankness. Dr. Hamilton, I have been your friend

and admirer ever since the night of my début—that fearful infliction to which every girl who aspires to society must submit. I shall never forget how kindly you came to my relief—how you skilfully shielded the frightened girl, and how you managed to restore my composure and put me at my ease. From that time we have been friends, and I believe you have always had a kind spot in your heart for me. Not that I ever had designs upon you in a matrimonial way, or that you ever thought of me otherwise than one with whom you could spend a pleasant hour. We have exchanged insinuations—you that I am coming back to Denver—I that you are no longer heart whole. You seem to forget that I am as intimate with Kate as you are with Mr. Dalzell. Now, let us talk out or drop the subject. Which shall it be?"

"It seems Miss Kate has been talking to you about me. What did she say?"

"I will let you know after you have told me what Mr. Dalzell has said to you about me."

"I see you have been to the fencing school. So you insist on me breaking the ice, do you?"

"No, I do not insist on any such thing, for, as you call it, I have already broken the ice. But I do insist, to carry out your simile, that you enter the waters with me and share the dangers—if there be any."

"Well, here we go into the water. Dalzell has talked very freely to me about himself, Miss Grace, but he has told me very little about you. He does not deny that he is in love with you and that he is

seeking to marry you, but if there is any engagement or understanding between you he has never admitted it to me nor has he intimated such a thing. Granting that the matter has been discussed between you, he considers it your secret and he is too much of a gentleman to speak of it."

"When I see Mr. Dalzell I shall give him permission to tell you anything you may wish to know; provided you prove yourself a good boy and tell me certain things I want to know."

"That will not do, Miss Grace, for you proposed an exchange of confidences, and how is it that you now refer me to Mr. Dalzell?"

"Well, I shall set you a good example and I shall expect you to be equally frank. When, merely by way of pleasantry, you remarked that you were almost tempted to ask me to come back to Denver and keep house for you, I replied in the same vein, but with more of truth, that you were too late. By that I meant that I am engaged to Mr. Dalzell and that I expect to marry him. I also told you that I expect to come to Denver again after Kate had visited me at my home. In other words, she has promised to be present at my marriage, and we expect to return with her to Denver. Now, I have, as I said I would do, set you a good example and you must not forget that I am in the confessional and waiting to hear you. Before you proceed, however," she added with a smile, "I wish to call your attention to quite an advantage which your jesting intimation has given me. It is the privilege of old age to live among the 'might

have beens,' and when I get to be an old woman and you get to be a surgeon with a national reputation, as I believe you soon will be, and the people are talking about the great Dr. Hamilton, I can say he is an old friend of mine, and on a certain occasion he intimated to me that he had considered the question of asking me to become his wife and I told him he was too late. It will be a pleasant reminiscence, and I don't care if you did make it in jest, I shall be sure to tell it."

"The truth," said Hamilton, "is sometimes spoken in jest. I admit that none but the coward does it—"

"And, therefore," interrupted Grace, "it is not Dr. Hamilton's way. So we will dismiss that phase of the question. You forget, however, that I am in the confessional—you can proceed, I am listening."

"Before I proceed, let me tell you how delighted I am with your choice. Leaving myself out, of course, I am honest in saying that you could not improve on it. Dalzell is the best man I know—you are familiar with the saying that no man knows himself—and I rejoice that you have, in my opinion, secured the biggest prize in the matrimonial market. As I am to lose, I am well pleased that Dalzell is to win. With you and Livingstone here we will often live over the old days and have many a good time."

"Doctor, I am just now more interested in your present, and I want to know if there is any trouble between you and Kate?"

"I can assure you there is none of my making."

"My friend, your answer is evasive and at the same time it is an admission that there is trouble—but of Kate's making. How can I judge of whose making it is without being made acquainted with the circumstances? It seems somebody is at fault and here you are, like father Adam, trying to put the blame on the woman without stating facts. Come, talk out. Tell me the facts, for I intend to know all about this trouble, and you might as well tell me first as last."

"The trouble between Miss Kate and myself is not uncommon between marriageable people—I am interested in her, but she is not interested in me, in fact, she is indifferent."

"Now, Doctor, we are getting down to business. I don't mean to say that Kate feels any special interest in you, but I do want to know why you think she is indifferent. What has she said or done to justify your conclusion?"

"I take it for granted that she has told you about the railroad wreck and what there took place?"

"Yes, she told me all about that; but what of it?"

"From the wreck we came to this city on the same train. When she had fully recovered she went to California and was absent for several months. On her return we met, and it took her a long time to find out that I was her surgeon on the occasion of the wreck. That fact alone, it seems to me, goes to show that she did not care even to know me, much less to cultivate my acquaintance."

"How did she find out that you were the surgeon of the wreck?"

"She knew me all the time, but did not care to recognize me—and there comes in the point."

"How do you know that she knew all the time that you and the wreck surgeon were one and the same person?"

"On the very best authority—she told me herself."

"Ah! You have talked the matter over with her, have you? Did she offer any explanation of her conduct, and what did she say?"

"Well, she made the *amende honorable,* as the duellist would say, and asked my forgiveness, and of course I granted it."

"Were you speaking truthfully when you told her you excused and forgave her?"

"Certainly. At that time I meant every word I said."

"Doctor, be honest and tell me, is it honorable in you to hold that mistake against her after you told her that her explanation was satisfactory and that you freely forgave her?"

"No, certainly not, and I mentioned it only to show her indifference—nothing more."

"If she had been indifferent, Doctor, would she have mentioned it at all?"

"Well, there are other facts going to show the same thing."

"So far, so good. We will dismiss the railroad wreck. Now go on and tell me some of the other facts going to show her indifference to you. I am

your friend and her friend, and I insist on knowing."

"When in attendance upon her at the wreck, I suggested that we give each other our names, as matter of convenience, and I informed her that I was Dr. Jack Hamilton. Her reply was that I might call her Kate. Of course I had to be content. I was spending the evening at the house of Judge Somers when I received the summons to New York about my uncle's affairs. Finding that I had but one hour in which to make my arrangements and catch the next train going East, I immediately rose to take my leave. She went out with me on the veranda and to the stoop, where I bade her good night, calling her Miss Somers, as was my custom. She replied by saying, I thought I gave you permission to call me Kate? This of course referred to what she had said at the wreck. I was on the steps at the instant of her reply, and I quickly turned to continue the conversation, but she would not linger and seemed to hurry away, saying, as she went, 'Doctor, you will miss your train. *Au revoir.*' "

"Well, my friend, what do you think her conduct showed?"

"I think it showed very clearly that she had no desire to canvass the wreck; that she was indifferent to the things and the persons connected with it, and that, in recalling it, she was merely amusing herself to see what effect it would have on me."

Grace looked at him with a smile of amusement playing about her mouth, and said:

"If she had remained and continued the conversation you would have missed your train, and under the circumstances that would have been most unfortunate. She said '*au revoir*,' which meant we will meet again and the conversation can be renewed. She brought the subject up herself, which showed that she was mindful of it and of the persons connected with it, and, more especially, of what passed between you and her. She asked you to lay aside formality, which showed that she was willing to be on a more familiar footing with you. She followed you out on the piazza to tell you all this, and yet you say she was only manifesting indifference to you and seeking amusement at your expense? My friend, in an uncompromising way, it showed interest and was as much encouragement as any womanly woman could afford to give, and, knowing her as I do, I am only surprised that she went so far."

"I confess, Miss Grace, I had not analyzed and looked at the matter from your point of view. Miss Grace, woman's intuition is seldom at fault. It is not her nature to be an idle onlooker in affairs of affection, and I have no doubt you know as well as I do that I am much interested in Miss Kate. I will go further, and tell you frankly that I have seriously thought of asking her to be my wife, but, try as I would, I never could get her to understand the object of my attention, or get from her a scintilla of encouragement by word, look, or gesture."

"You say you have tried in every possible way to get Kate to understand you, and without suc-

cess? Did you ever tell her that you loved her and ask her to marry you?"

"No, I never went so far as that, for I had no reason to suppose that such a proposition would be kindly received."

"It seems, then, that there is one way that you have not tried—the only way that can bring a response from a true and refined woman. According to your own admission, for I don't know how long, you have been trying by hints and side remarks, by intimations here and insinuations there, to entangle Kate without committing yourself. You have been seeking to find out, and that too by indirect means, the state of her feelings toward you before giving her to understand that she had found a lodgment in your affections. You have been trying to get an indirect proposal of marriage from her without declaring yourself or in any manner committing yourself. So that is the game you have been trying to work, is it? It was an insult to Kate's intelligence, an affront to her womanhood, and a disgrace to your manhood. I am surprised that she has not openly resented such treatment long ago. Dr. Hamilton, tell me frankly, do you consider that course of conduct honorable? Is it the part of a manly man and an honest lover?"

Seeing Hamilton flush under the questions, she said:

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, and you must not allow yourself to become angry or irritated. If you imagine that Kate did not observe your attentions and did not take notice of your

hints, I feel certain that I can safely assure you that you are mistaken. All such things we gather in quick enough, but how are we to know that you really mean that these attentions shall convey the true state of your feelings? If they are merely gallantries and intended for the passing hour and we accept them as serious, you can readily see that we become objects of amusement and, it may be, victims of ridicule. On the other hand, if they come from interested affection and are emanations from the heart, and we fail to estimate them at their true value, but receive them as complimentary gallantries for the purposes of a passing hour, and a proposal, to our surprise, is made and declined, we are charged with having cruelly lured the man to his fall and we are branded as heartless coquettes. You know what you mean, but we do not, and for that reason we have to be watchful of our conduct and guarded in our replies."

"Miss Grace, you make a strong case for your side of the house, and while your words carry a sting, they give no offense. However, if you carry out your views to their logical result, then, it seems to me, there will be an end to attentions and hints."

"Not at all. We are all fond enough of them and enjoy them as pastime. Further, their skilful use serves to put us on the alert. We like attention and we have no objection to lover-like hints, for if flattery is the food of fools it is none the less a tempting morsel to the wisest and the best of us. But what we do object to is the expectation on your part to entrap us into a betrayal of our true feel-

ings by such unmanly means. If you are permitted to be gallant without censure, why are we not permitted to be agreeable without reproach?"

"I suppose Mr. Dalzell never offered to entertain you with such trifles?"

'You know better than that. He was attentive and he did give hints. As I have said, these things have their time and place and are all right in themselves. They are wrong only when used for a sinister purpose, and I can say he never, either directly or indirectly, tried to find out what I thought of him in the way of matrimony, until he openly declared his love for me and asked me to become his wife. Any other course is not suited to his nature, and it seems to me it is the only course open to the manly man and the honest lover."

"From your standpoint, Miss Grace, your views are correct. To show you that I really agree with you, I will tell you that I began a frank declaration to Miss Kate only the other night, when we were interrupted—and very much to her relief, as it seemed to me.' '

"The interested party is seldom a good judge in such matters. Tell me all about it and let me sit in judgment."

"It took place the night of the Dalzell entertainment and out on the lawn. But I am of opinion that you know what took place between Miss Kate and myself on that night. The illustration that you gave last night, when you pictured yourself and Dalzell sitting in some cozy nook amid the mountain scenery, and the supposition that I

should come and interrupt the sweet nothings that he was whispering in your ear, satisfied me that you are acquainted with much that happened that night on the lawn."

"Yes, and for this pleasant outing I am, in some measure, indebted to your selfish desire to find out what Kate had told me. Oh, you need not raise your hands in protest. A man in love is more transparent than he thinks he is, and your motive was mirrored in your eyes and face when you asked me to drive with you. Well, I will not deny that, after a prolonged effort with cork-drawing questions that would win the admiration of lawyers and make my fortune, if I were engaged in the profession, I did succeed in getting Kate to tell me something of the happenings of that night out on the lawn. Did you expect to continue your proposal in the presence of Inez?"

"Why do you ask that question? You know that I had no such thought."

"Did you expect Kate to show, by word or conduct, to Inez that her appearance was disturbing and inopportune?"

"Certainly not, but I did not expect her to 'slop over' with joy."

"Dr. Hamilton, that slangy remark is unworthy of you and unjust to Kate. Was not her manner in receiving Inez calculated to conceal what was passing between you and her, and might this not have been her motive?"

"You may be right in that, but I do not think it was necessary to be so demonstrative. I confess it

annoyed me, and when I went back to the house and saw Carson dallying with her I admit that my annoyance hardened into irritation."

"If, by dallying, you mean wasting time, I think you are very much mistaken. Mr. Carson, as I see it, is trying to improve every moment and is anxious to make hay—if only he can get the sun to shine. In my opinion, he is very much in earnest."

"And how about Miss Kate, is she also in earnest?"

"Yes, I think she is just as much in earnest as is Mr. Carson." As Grace said this she was looking smilingly into his face, and he was looking searchingly into hers as he said:

"What do you mean? Do you mean that she will marry him?"

"I don't know that I ought to tell you, but I will turn Jesuit for once and let the end sanctify the means. Mr. Carson stands as much chance of marrying Kate as I do of marrying the man in the moon, and that is certainly, as the lawyers call it, a case of remoteness."

"Thank you! That is the most comforting remark that you have made since we set out driving—indeed, the only one."

"Now that I have told you of Mr. Carson's chances, I suppose you would like to hear what Kate thinks of you?'

"Go on. You could not give me a greater pleasure—if favorable."

"In the first place, I am not certain that I know, and in the second place I would not tell you if I did

know. But there is one thing I do know—you will never find out what she thinks by hints and fox-like circlings. If you ever marry Kate Somers you will have to talk out like a man and a lover—you will have to tell her that you love her and that you want her for your wife."

"But what if she should decline to be Mrs. Hamilton?"

"Well, you would be no worse off than you now are, and it may be that you will be nearer your object, for you will have made a beginning, and a good judge of our sex has said 'one rebuff is no rejection.' Do you remember the lines that Sir Walter Scott ascribes to Raleigh and Good Queen Bess? You do not? Well, then I will try and recall them to your mind. The Queen was going along the street to her barge for an excursion on the Thames. She came to a muddy place and hesitated, when Raleigh, whose fortune it was to be standing near the spot, threw his scarlet cloak over the muddy place. She stepped upon the cloak and passed on to her boat. As she did so the Queen recognized the courtesy with a smile and a bow, but she did not know the comely youth, as he was quite young and had never been presented at court. When she reached her barge she sent an attendant back in search of a young man with a muddy cloak. Raleigh was found, taken to the barge, and into the Queen's presence. Thus his wonderful career was begun with a scarlet cloak to end on the headman's scaffold. A day or two after the cloak incident the Queen gave a banquet at her palace, which Raleigh

attended. He was seen standing at the window of a pavilion writing on a pane of glass with a diamond which the Queen had given him. She heard of the incident, and in company with one of her court ladies she went to see what the young man had written, and found this line:

"'Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall.'

"The Queen was amused, and said to her companion there ought to be a couplet. She studied for a minute, and then wrote underneath Raleigh's line:

"'If thy heart fail thee, do not climb at all.'"

"Thank you," said Hamilton; "I will put my fortune to the test this night, and during my call you must have business in your room for half an hour."

"You shall do no such thing. It would be neither for your good nor my comfort."

"I don't understand you. Why not to-night?"

"Because she might suspect that this drive had something to do with it, and if she did she might not be altogether gracious to you and she might feel annoyed with me. You must wait until I am gone, so she can have no suspicion that I have had a hand in weaving the web of her destiny."

"Well, you understand such matters better than I do, and while I do not like the delay I shall follow your advice. Now, tell me, when are you and Dalzell to marry?"

"The day is not fixed. There are certain formalities that Mr. Dalzell must go through before we can do that. But it is not far away, as I do not believe in long engagements. No man has the right to ask a girl to marry him until he is ready and willing to take care of her, and no girl has the right to enter into an agreement of that kind until she is ready and willing to fulfill it.

"In society an engaged girl is neither fish, nor flesh, nor good salt herring. She is neither married nor single. She is merely a target for cheap and stale witticisms, and impertinent hints and innuendoes. The man is in the same condition, and sensitive and sensible people do not care to endure this state of affairs longer than is necessary. After Mr. Dalzell has interviewed father we will fix the day, and I will add I expect to be a citizen of Denver within the next three months. As I am not fond of making a spectacular show of myself, it will be a very quiet affair. I hope that you and Dr. Livingstone will be present."

"With our hospital and our general practice we are very busy, and it will not be possible for both of us to leave the city. I will give way to Livingstone, as your family and his are connected. By the way, does Livingstone know of your engagement?"

"No. It is known only to you and Kate, and the Dalzell mother and sister—but you may tell him."

"May I tell Dr. Blake? I know he will be delighted."

"Yes, you may tell him, but no one else. Dear old Uncle Gus, what a treasure he is. I don't know how any one could get sick with him around—he so abounds with humor, and that of the infectious kind."

CHAPTER XXIV

It was night. Hamilton and Livingstone had been discussing a troublesome case. This had been going on an hour or more, when Livingstone turned to Hamilton and said:

"You were driving with Grace this afternoon. Did you enjoy the drive and did you learn anything that is tellable?"

"Yes, I enjoyed the drive very much. Who could fail to enjoy a drive with Grace—she is so sprightly and sensible, so unselfish and unaffected! Among other things, she told me that she is engaged to Dalzell, and gave me permission to tell you and Dr. Blake. You must remember, however, that she forbids all further communication."

"I take it for granted that she has told Miss Kate?"

"It was thoughtless of you to put that remark in the form of a question, for you certainly know, as between those two, there are no secrets."

"Well, Jack, I am glad of it. I knew that Dalzell was making the fight of his life and I had serious misgivings as to the result. Grace is a lovable woman and there always will be sunshine in her home. She will be quite an addition to our

Eastern colony, and I trust an early day has been named for the ceremony."

"Grace, you know, leaves next Wednesday for her home. Dalzell will accompany her, and after he has interviewed the pater they will settle upon the all-important day for taking the marriage vow. I have good reason for thinking it will not be long deferred, as she expressed the hope that she would be with us again within the next three months."

"I suppose you will be present as best man?"

"No, I shall remain here and look after our affairs. You are connected with Grace's family, and it is right and proper that you should fill that position. Nobody will accompany Dalzell from Denver except his sister, Miss Kate, and you. It is a congenial party and I hope, Sid, you will avail yourself of the opportunities offered, and, like the little busy bee, improve each shining hour."

"Jack, you will do me the kindness to explain what you mean by such language? What am I to infer?"

"Perhaps, Sid, I ought not to have said it, but, having said it, the explanation is, that nothing would please me better than to see you and Inez growing into each other's affections."

"Unless it is to hear Miss Kate say *yes* to the all-important question," answered Livingstone, laughing. "People who live in glass houses, Jack, ought to be careful how they throw stones. Without regard to what she may think, granting that my feelings are in accord with your wishes, I could not be prevailed upon to give utterance to a single

word that would direct her thoughts into the channel you suggest. Her brother will naturally give his attention to Miss Kate and will expect me to look after his sister. Practically, she places herself under my care, and I do not believe any man, claiming to be a gentleman, would for a moment think of abusing a woman who is looking to him for protection. As I view the matter, it would be dishonorable in me to bestow upon her any attentions beyond those of cordial friendship. Under the circumstances, any other course places the woman at a great disadvantage, and no man could intentionally do that and be a gentleman."

"You are right, Sid, and I spoke without thinking. But I feel dull and sluggish, and I propose that we go round to Van Tromp's rooms and have a game of billiards. What say you?"

When they arrived at Van Tromp's rooms they found Carson, Percival, and two others engaged in a game of whist. Van Tromp, with a friend, was looking on, and Dr. Blake and Dalzell, who had called on business with Van Tromp, were in the act of leaving. As Hamilton and Livingstone entered, Dr. Blake called out to them:

"Hello, have you knight-errants come in to join in the boisterously festive game you call—whist? I know of but one other amusement that can rival it in noisy gaiety—chess. I was reading to-day about a game now going on between two well-known players. The writer stated that the game had been running vigorously for ten days and only five moves had been made. He went on to say,

however, that it was a most interesting game. Think of it! Five moves in ten days and the game most interesting! I had rather be caught playing pranks and having fun with the mummy of old Rameses. It would be a cloudburst of merriment in comparison and, as intellectual provender, much more interesting."

"My friend," said Hamilton, "chess is said to be a very intellectual game, and more particularly does it test the military genius. I suppose you may have heard as much?"

"Oh, yes, I have heard all that, and I have heard that the moon is made of green cheese, but I never believed it. Paul Morphy was, perhaps, the greatest chess player the world has produced, and if he was ever good for anything else I have never heard of it. Napoleon was the greatest chieftain that ever acted a part on the military stage, and it is a well-known fact that he was an indifferent chess player. History nowhere shows that a military genius ever excelled at chess. On the other hand, my observation and my reading satisfies me that the great chess player, like the fiddler, is, as a rule, absolutely worthless outside his specialty."

"How comes it, Doctor, with such views that we find you here in attendance upon the whist table?" asked Livingstone.

"I am not in attendance, nor is it a joy to me. If I had known it was going on I would have passed by on the other side. I was on my way home when I chanced to meet with Dalzell, and I asked him to come with me and witness the pay-

ment of a fee that I owed Van Tromp for counsel on a matter that I knew, or ought to have known, more about than he did. Having been fool enough to counsel with him, I had to meet the tariff, and Van Tromp being a lawyer, I wanted a witness to the payment."

"Why a witness? You could have taken a receipt and that would have barred all further claim."

"My dear Livingstone, you are but little versed in the ways of the legal fraternity. You are still in the callow stage of life. Van Tromp could make me pay him a second time. He could sue me for the fee, and when I bring forward the receipt he could put up a half-dozen witnesses of national renown as experts in handwriting and prove that it is all a forgery—skilfully executed, but none the less a forgery. It is true that I could put up a half-dozen other witnesses—expert witnesses of equal reputation—and prove just the contrary. All this, you can easily see, would leave the matter in doubt and give Van Tromp an even chance to win the case and convict me of forgery. I don't propose to take any such risk."

There was quite a laugh as the doctor finished ventilating his views as to the value of expert testimony, and Carson, from the whist table, called:

"Hey, there, you fellows, I wish you would stop your noise—you are interfering with the game."

Dr. Blake winked at Livingstone, and in a whispering tone said:

"These fellows think they have a monopoly on

all amusement. They are not willing for the other fellow to have a little fun. We must get out of this place, or these fellows will bring the house about our heads with their boisterous merriment."

"No, come into the billiard room," said Hamilton. "Sid and I came here for a game of billiards, and when we have finished the game we will all go home with you and see you safely in bed after this night of your excessive dissipation."

They went to the room, and soon the game was begun and carried on with a zest known only to lovers of the sport. Having finished the game, they started for the street. Passing through the whist room they found the party taking a recess, and Carson entertaining those present with some of his adventures among the demi-monde and grisettes of Paris. As Hamilton was passing, Carson called to him:

"Dr. Hamilton, I am amusing the boys with bits of my experience among the soiled beauties of Paris; but I know that mine, in comparison with yours, are nothing more than the flashes of the firefly compared with electric arc lights. Stay, and let us hear from you."

"I have no experiences of that kind that I care to recall, much less to relate, Mr. Carson."

"Do you mean that you have had no experiences of that kind?"

"Not at all. My experience has been large and varied. I mean only that I had rather forget all such than talk about them."

"You made quite a reputation in Paris, Doctor,

and you could be quite entertaining if you were only accommodating."

"Mr. Carson, you were in Paris after I had left the place, and I have no idea what the young hot bloods and sports of that city told you about me and my doings in their hilarious moments. However, I have nothing to deny or conceal and I give you liberty to repeat anything you may have heard, if you think it will prove a source of pleasure to your friends. But I do not think I ought to be charged with a want of accommodation merely because I decline to wade through the filth of a past life for the amusement of other people."

By this time the two men were standing near each other and Hamilton was speaking in the rather low, determined tone that always characterized him when strongly moved. Evidently a crisis was approaching, and Percival attempted to avert it by saying:

"Carson, we took a recess of only twenty minutes and the time is out. You promised me another rubber and an opportunity for my revenge."

But Carson did not seem to hear him, and said:

"Doctor, don't you think you are overdoing the reform business—just a little, to say the least of it?"

Hamilton was looking intently at him as he replied:

"No, I do not. I am acting on principle, and if there remains a doubting Thomas I hope soon to convince him by consistent conduct."

"Does Job serve God for naught?" was Carson's sneering answer.

"That is the voice of the tempter, and it is the second time I have heard as much from you. Now, I demand an explanation."

"It is easily given. I believe you are acting a part for a purpose, and I do not believe one word of what you say about principle, and—"

All further utterance was stopped by Hamilton's open hand coming like a flash of lightning against his mouth. Carson staggered back, more from astonishment than from the force of the blow, and then he leaped forward as the cougar springs for its victim. He was caught by his friends and held. In a moment he was calm, and turned and left the room

When he had gone, Dr. Blake said something about leaving the place, and received for answer:

"Not yet. I must stay and await the pleasure of Mr. Carson and his friends. Further, I want every one of you to remain and see the end of this trouble. You saw the beginning of it, and you must see the ending of it. Sit down, and I think it will not be long before we can see the coming of the courier."

In about twenty minutes Mr. Lawson, one of the whist party, came in and stated that he had been sent by Mr. Carson to demand satisfaction for the insult to which he had been subjected.

"What kind of satisfaction does Mr. Carson want?" was Hamilton's question.

"He demands that you meet him under the rules of the ring and that you fight him to a finish."

"I thought," Hamilton replied, "that the challenged party always had the right to choose the weapons for the combat. But tell your principal that at last he finds me accommodating. It shall be as he wishes. When and where does he propose to have this meeting?"

"He demands that it take place here, and as soon as the necessary preparations can be made."

"Tell your principal that I am always accommodating—let it be here and now. Having agreed to his every demand, I suppose he will grant me the privilege of choosing my own seconds. For any further details I refer you to Mr. Dalzell and Dr. Livingstone."

After Lawson had gone, Dr. Blake, addressing himself to Hamilton, wanted to know if it was impossible to bring about an adjustment that would be satisfactory to all parties.

"In my opinion," answered Hamilton, "you will find an adjustment impossible. I think Mr. Carson has been seeking the present status of affairs for more than twelve months. He prides himself upon his physical manhood and his pugilistic skill, and when a good general obtains what he considers a strategic advantage he never willingly consents to the escape of the enemy."

Van Tromp came in and said:

"Gentlemen, you must vacate this room. It has been agreed upon as the battleground. The seconds have gone to the athletic clubrooms for

gloves, belts, and other necessary things and will return in a short time. They soon returned—the usual formalities were complied with—the gong sounded and the battle was on.

First Round: The men went promptly to the scratch and, in the sparring that followed for an opening, each showed that he understood his business. After sparring for a time, Carson led with his left for the body, but was neatly blocked. The fight was rapid. Hamilton seemed to be acting on the defensive and he showed extraordinary footwork. Carson feinted with his right and made a quick and vicious lead for the neck, which Hamilton avoided by side-stepping and receiving the blow without force on his uplifted shoulder.

Second Round: Hamilton, still playing on the defensive, with Carson forcing the fighting and trying to bore his way in, but constantly foiled. But he continued to bore, and soon sent his right with tremendous force for the head, which Hamilton dodged and viciously sent his left to the body—staggering Carson, who, in turn, rushed and clinched. There was some rapid inside work, and in the break away Hamilton upper-cut, bringing the blood.

Third Round: The fierce fighting was beginning to tell. Carson seemed to realize that he had met his match and was more cautious. Hamilton went to work as if he intended to finish the fight. He forced matters, and Carson gradually gave ground until, seeing an opening, he delivered a fearful body blow, while Hamilton countered with his left on the eye. It was a true blinker and drove

Carson's head back. Then there was a good deal of fiddling, when Hamilton began again to force matters and Carson clinched. The break away was clear. Then there was more fiddling, when Carson presented Hamilton with a staggering blow on the knowledge box and Hamilton again countered on the wounded optic.

Fourth Round: By this time Carson's eye was badly swollen and shot with blood, but he sent himself into the fight for all he was worth. Hamilton again played on the defensive, slowly giving ground. Carson pushed the fight with supreme energy, and delivered two or three knock-out blows had they gone home. Suddenly Hamilton took the offensive, and sent his left to the body just below the heart, and stiffening his arm he seemed to rip everything upward. Carson went down upon his hands and knees, gasping for breath. He remained in that position until eight had been counted, when he rose to his feet and, fortunately for him, the end of the round was sounded.

Fifth Round: Hamilton went in to win, but Carson was game—fought with desperation and took his punishment like a man. Suddenly Hamilton feinted with his right, and with lightning-like speed and all his weight behind the blow he struck Carson with the left under and near the turn of the jaw—fairly lifting him from the floor. He went down, attempted to rise, fell back and was counted out.

Hamilton, turning to Dr. Blake, was the first to speak.

"Dr. Blake, I wish you and Livingstone would see that Mr. Carson has every needed attention. Dalzell and I will wait for you in Van Tromp's room."

As they entered the room, Dalzell said:

"Hamilton, I envy you that blow, for the whole city will feel the good effects of it."

"What do you mean, Dalzell? I am not sure I understand you."

"I mean it will give some relief to the boys over whom Carson has bullied and blustered and lorded it for several years."

"I never once thought of the public good, and I am truly sorry that the necessity was forced upon me. I have no ambition to excel in that line—it partakes too much of the brutal, and the man whose only pride is in his physical strength concedes that the ox or the ass is his superior."

"You ought not to be too hard on Carson," said Dalzell, laughing, "now that you have got him down. But, entertaining the views that you have just expressed, why is it that you have made yourself an expert in the science of the ring?"

"First, for the good of the vital organs by developing the physical man. Second, as a means of self-defense in time of need—to-night, for instance. Mithradates, we are told, fed on poisons until he was immune, but it does not follow that he was fond of the diet."

Blake and Livingstone returned with the information that Carson was coming round all right. Dr. Blake said:

"Yes, he will soon be on his pins again, all right enough, but it will be some time before he shows that face on the street or stands at the corner to ogle the passing girl with that eye in which Hamilton planted the fever germs. But to think that I should be caught in such company in my old age, and have the beauty of my Christian character sullied with the dust of the prize ring! I remember, years ago, to have read about a brace of worthies known as Castor and Pollux, who must have instituted the ring business. They may have been very fine gentlemen in their day and generation, but I have always regarded them as a pair of brutal bullies. It may be that the language in which I was first forced to read of their exploits had something to do with my aversion, but I cannot refrain from placing the same estimate upon all their devotees and followers. I shall not be able to face the public, to attend to my church duties, or to be a co-laborer with my pastor in good works for months to come."

They were all laughing at the assumed woe-begone, broken-hearted expression his face wore, when Dalzell replied:

"Doctor, you are only investing in futures and heaping up excuses for the line of conduct that you know that you are going to pursue—judging the future by the past and in the light of Patrick Henry's lamp. As to the unexpected adventure of the night, we all regret it as much as you do; and, but for the necessity forced upon us, we would be as

much ashamed of our presence at a ring fight as you could possibly be."

"What you say, Dalzell, reminds me of Pat Todd's first experience with his sweetheart."

"Tell us about it, Doctor."

"As you all know Pat, I thought, perhaps, that you had heard of his first success as a beau. Pat was in his teens and was in love with a girl still earlier in her teens. They lived near together and about one-fourth of a mile from the church of their parents. They were mutually smitten, and in a general way were getting along beautifully, when Pat was seized with the conviction that he could no longer carry his bosom's burden unless he could breathe into her shell-like ear the sweet whisperings of his heart. He was much worried for an opportunity, but the happy thought came to him of asking her to walk to church the following Sunday night. Well, she consented and—well, the night did come, after what Pat thought an immensity of time.

"It was a cloudless night, the moon was at the full, and everything was basking in the beauty of her light—a night that lovers love. They managed to hitch on to each other, and after getting out on the sidewalk Pat suggested that it was a very pleasant night. She agreed with him, and silence reigned for the next fifty yards. Pat then remarked that it was a beautiful evening. She agreed with him, and impressive silence prevailed for the next one hundred yards. Pat then suggested that the moon must be at the full. She

agreed with him, and prolonged silence followed. In desperation, Pat suggested that everybody must love a mooney night. She agreed with him, and oppressive silence hung around the loving twain until they reached the church. Their return from church was about as boisterous and hilarious as their going. When they had managed to steer themselves back to the stoop of his sweetheart's home, she said to Pat, 'Please don't tell anybody what we have been saying and doing to-night—I am so ashamed of it.' Pat promised eternal silence, saying, 'I am just as much ashamed of it as you are.'

"As they are now prominent in society, I don't mind telling you that the girl is now Pat's wife, and you all know how sweetly entertaining she is and how quick at repartee when occasion demands. Pat told me about his first effort some two years ago, when I was called to see their little boy, who had a pimple on his nose or some such trifle. She was present and said it was all true, and laughed until I thought I heard the corset strings giving way. Now that we have found out that we are all ashamed of each other, I think it about time that we scattered for our roosting places."

"Before we separate," said Hamilton, "I would like to say a word on behalf of Castor and Pollux. Doctor, I don't think you sufficiently appreciate them, and I do fear that they have a great and lasting advantage of you."

"Well, go on and tell me the wonderful advan-

tage that brace of bruisers has over me. I am curious to know."

"They have been translated, and from the heavens they look down upon you from Gemini or the Twins. I won't say anything about your chance for going in that direction."

The doctor looked at him for a moment in a pitying way and said:

"Poor fellow! Much learning doth make thee mad! Dalzell, you and Livingstone come with me and we will try and get him to his rooms."

CHAPTER XXV

It was the afternoon of the next day. Dr. Blake had come in from the hospital, and he was sitting in the library when Kate entered in search of a book. She found the book and was leaving the room, when she stopped and asked:

"Uncle Gus, is Mr. Carson sick?"

"I haven't seen Mr. Carson to-day. Why do you ask the question?"

"Because I expected to drive with him this afternoon, and this morning I received a note from him telling me he could not come, and—"

"And because he has thrown you overboard you imagine he must be sick, eh? He is fortunate to escape the charge of lunacy."

"Uncle Gus, how often have I told you that it is rude to interrupt another when speaking? I imagine no such thing. I was going on to tell you, when you interrupted me, that he was at that time under the care of Dr. Livingstone and that he was forced to cancel the engagement that he had made."

"I didn't know that you were engaged to Carson. Sorry to hear it. I don't know what Dick will say, but you can rest assured that you will get no benediction from me."

"Now, Uncle Gus, you are talking nonsense and you evade the question."

"Well, I haven't seen Livingstone to-day. Is that satisfactory?"

"No, you are still evading, and that excites my curiosity and quickens my interest in the question. You are concealing something and I intend to stay here until I get it. You will save time—the stuff that life is made of—and strengthen your veracity, which is much worn, by making a beginning."

"Purgatory is a garden of roses compared to a woman when her suspicion is aroused or her curiosity is excited. Sit down and I will tell you all I know."

He then told her of the trouble between Hamilton and Carson; repeated the conversation that led up to it; gave her the particulars of the fight and the result. She eagerly listened to the details, and when he had finished she sat for some time studying the carpet at her feet. Looking up, she said:

"Uncle Gus, you don't know how sorry I am that this thing happened. It would have been much better if Dr. Hamilton could have done as John Randolph did on a certain occasion."

"I don't think it happened," said the doctor. "It was a campaign planned by Carson, but worked to a finish for which he had not bargained. Hamilton is a man of peace, but he is no cooing dove, as Carson found out to his sorrow; and I don't see what other course Hamilton could have pursued. He

did what any man of spirit and proper self-respect would have done.

"But you said something about what John Randolph did—John Randolph of Roanoke, as he was haughtily pleased to call himself. Go on and tell me what he did. If you know anything good of him, I shall be pleased to hear it, for I would like if possible to modify my opinion of that compound of vinegar and vitriol."

"It seems he was so unfortunate as to offend a gentleman—"

"Unfortunate!" broke in the doctor. "Why, Kate, giving offense was his mission in life. But go on."

"How can I go on when you are constantly interrupting me? After the alleged insult this gentleman met Mr. Randolph on the street. He placed himself directly in the way of Mr. Randolph, and with an oath said, 'I never give the road to rascals!' Mr. Randolph bowed and merely remarked as he passed round him, 'I always do.' "

"Yes, Kate, that was in his line. He was only carrying out his mission. It was only another way of saying to the bully, you are another. That kind of coin is not current among gentlemen, nor is it Hamilton's way of resenting an insult. Carson gave him the lie, and surely you would not have him stand meekly by and say, you are another?"

"No, I would not. Only for his sake I wish it could have been avoided."

"Ah, I knew the Puritan blood that rode with

Cromwell and his Ironsides could be trusted by all the world to think right and to do right."

"Well, I suppose I don't know much about such matters. Was Dr. Hamilton injured in this unfortunate trouble?"

"No, he may have a bruise or two—mere trifles if he has them. When I saw him cantering along the street this morning he sat Hero as if he were just out of West Point.'

"How about Mr. Carson? I trust he is not seriously hurt?"

"No, when you consider the offense. He was knocked down only twice, and by twice putting his eye in the way of Hamilton's fist he got it hermetically sealed. I believe that is about all the damage he sustained. He will have business in his rooms or in the country for about a month. In the meantime, if you suffer you must be strong."

"Now, Uncle Gus, you are again talking nonsense. You know very well what I think of Mr. Carson. As a society gentleman he is perfect and I appreciate him, but I have never thought him adapted to the home life, and you know it."

"In this instance, Kate, I think the shot from your common-sense judgment knocks out the bull's eye. But don't forget, my dear girl, that at best when you go agleaning in the fields of Boaz you are only entering upon an experiment."

"There is a saying, Uncle Gus, that a man can't get rich unless his wife is willing, and another that a man is what his wife makes him."

"Our every-day experience is against your the-

ory, and our divorce courts tell a bad tale for woman's influence if your sayings are to be taken as true. There are women who look upon marriage as a stepping-stone to reformation. Just how any woman can be so ignorant as to suppose that where the lover fails the husband will succeed, is beyond sane comprehension. Yet, the woods are full of just such creatures, who go on day after day and year after year trying the desperate experiment."

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast," quoted Kate.

"But the next line, Kate, tells the life story of many a sufferer—'Man never is but always to be blest.' "

CHAPTER XXVI

Acting on the suggestion of Grace, Hamilton let two weeks go by before he called upon Kate. In the meantime, Grace had left for New York, accompanied by Dalzell, who had returned, saying that he had gone through his examination and had won first prize, which would be turned over to him in about two months. The return of Dalzell, odorous with the perfumes of paradise, quickened Hamilton's desire to see Kate. When he called he found her entertaining a gentleman who was introduced to him as Mr. Percy from California. After the introduction, Mr. Percy, ignoring the presence of Hamilton, continued the conversation with Kate about men and things that she and he had seen in California. Hamilton could only sit and listen. Mr. Percy had a never-failing flow of words, but he was an utter stranger as to what the word conversation means. His idea of conversation was to have some one sit quietly and listen to what Mr. Percy had seen, or heard, or done. In the hope of bringing on a general conversation, Kate asked him for his experience in Congress. So it came out that he was a member of the lower house. He seemed to have no thought of measures, but began to talk of men, their char-

acter, their foibles, their peculiarities, and to flood the room with anecdotes. He belonged to the Republican party—he did—and outside of that party there was to be found neither wisdom nor patriotism. He had contributed to its success and its power. He intimated that he had a share in directing the administration of the government, for he had given some valuable suggestions to the President. He was about to take control of the government, when Hamilton received a summons to his office. His relief was beatific, and akin to that which the weary pilgrim must feel when passing within the pearly gates.

Disgusted with the outcome of his effort to see Kate, he devoted himself for several days to his professional business. But deep down in his heart he could hear the song that mother Eve set agoing in the garden, which has come floating down to us through the centuries, just as new and just as pure and just as sweet as were the first notes that stirred the sleeping Adam on the morn of her creation. Yielding to the music, he again called on Kate. To his dismay, he found Mr. Percy in command of the room and at the floodtide of words. As he entered, Kate said:

"Dr. Hamilton, I am glad to see you. Mr. Percy and I are starting on a tour of Europe and the East generally, and we will be delighted to have you bear us company."

"Thank you, Miss Kate. I could think of no greater pleasure than a tour with you through the

old world, and to visit with you its living wonders and its decaying ruins shrouded with beauty."

"Ah," said Percy, "I infer that you have crossed the pond. No man's education is complete who hasn't crossed the pond," and he got himself afloat again.

He got lost in a London fog—he stood on the bridge and saw the Thames, it wasn't much of a stream and could not compare with some of our Western rivers—he visited the lakes in Scotland, but saw only small sheets of water—he stumbled on Kenilworth, but there was nothing worth seeing, only a pile of rubbish—he had a gay time on the boulevards of Paris and the café was just the place for the gods. The carnival at Rome was glorious. Venice is built on islands and the people go about in boats. He had gone up the Nile and was just about to get a glimpse of the Sphinx and the Pyramids, when Dr. Blake, passing the door, called out:

"Hello, Hamilton, come to the library. I want to see you." As Hamilton entered the library, Dr. Blake said:

"Sit down. I only wanted to do you a kindness."

Hamilton sat down and turned to him with a look of expectancy. Dr. Blake was indulging in a quiet laugh as he remarked:

"You must be hard to satisfy, Hamilton. What more do you expect? Haven't I already conferred an unspeakable kindness when I took you from

under the cataract of words and downpour of platitudes."

Hamilton joined in the laugh, saying:

"Who asks for a greater must leave hope behind! But you must have had an experience and I long to hear it."

"Well, yes, I met the gentleman, and—suffered. I tell you if I were given the choice of a day in his company or suicide—the coroner would get a job. I think Shakespeare must have been thinking of the gentleman when he said, 'The fool has planted his memory with an army of words'; and, yet, the man is not a fool. Well, it came about in this way. I was walking on the piazza late in the afternoon, when the gentleman from California came to the stoop. He presented his card to me and I presented him with my name. He asked for Kate. I told him she had gone out shopping, but she would be back in the course of a half hour, and I unwittingly asked him to come in and await her return. He acted on the suggestion, and of course it devolved on me to entertain the gentleman from California until she came. We went into the parlor and made ourselves comfortable. I naturally supposed I could make the time pass pleasantly until Kate could get in from her inspection of hats and ribbons, laces and gloves, and silks and satins—but I didn't make proper time allowance for gossip with Ada and Inez, with whom she met. We got along fairly well for some fifteen minutes, and much after the manner of strangers who have met for the first time. In my effort to make conversa-

tion I was so unfortunate as to make an adverse remark relative to the policy of the administration in its dealings with trusts, and—lo!—I found I had a live member of Congress on my hands. Then and there he took the conversational bit in his teeth and ran away with the congressional wagon. I swung on to the reins, but soon found that I had lost all control. Never in my life have I been so drenched with a stream of words. I tried several times to dam the flood and divert its course, but the boy that stood on the bank waiting for the river to flow by that he might cross dry shod to the other side was an emblem of wisdom compared to my feeble efforts. The deluge had lasted for about an hour, when Kate came in. I fled to my room in a state of nervous prostration, and—"

"Took a restorative," interjected Hamilton.

"Right, you are; and I am pleased to see that you have a genial recollection of the remedy."

"But you must admit, Doctor, that he is a good talker, even if you did not enjoy his lecture."

"Lecture! Why, Hamilton, a lecture calls for a subject and some continuity of thought. That fellow can talk only of what he has seen or heard. He is made up of fragments,—*disjecta membra,*—and he can get to one thing from another with a speed that puts to naught the flight of the humming-bird. Thought enough to beget an original idea would give that man congestion of the brain. In style and diction, as you suggest, he is above the average. But the quantity! The quantity! And, I might add, that he sometimes drops into slang."

"I didn't know that you objected to slang," said Hamilton.

"Maybe I do and maybe I don't. It depends upon the person using it."

"Ah! I perceive, and I think I understand."

"Which proves, Hamilton, that what I have said of you is true—that you are a man of rare intelligence.

"However, I almost like the fellow for the stab about the fifth rib he unwittingly gave Dick. When he got up to go to his hotel it was about time to turn on the lights, and Kate asked him to stay for supper—Kate calls it dinner; there's nothing in a name, so the spread is satisfactory. He accepted. In the dining-room he met Dick, who managed to exchange a few words with him. But soon the tide of words was at the flood again and the Californian was doing all the talking. Now and then Kate would get in a word—you can't shut a woman out, you know, and she will have her innings and say something even if it is nothing, but she didn't get much encouragement. Dick was much amused, and now and then I could catch his eye brimming with fun. Before the regulation hour was over he told an anecdote which I enjoyed at Dick's expense. Dick being a judge must have suggested it. He had a lawyer friend, Pringle by name, who had devoted much time and labor on a case of considerable importance in the United States Circuit Court. When it came on for trial it was decided against him. He appealed to the Supreme Court at Washington. At the right time Pringle went to Wash-

ington, and on call of the case he rose, made a statement of the case, and entered on his argument. When he began the argument the Justices looked down, seized their pens, and began to write. Pringle stopped. The Justices looked up. Pringle began again and the Justices went to writing again. The parties went through this show a third time, when Pringle said: 'Your Honors, the case at bar is one of many difficulties and involving nice legal distinctions. I have devoted two years of study to it, and I am satisfied that I know more about it than any living man. I have come three thousand miles, and at no little expense, to discuss my legal views of this case, and I will be grateful to your Honors if you will grant me a patient hearing.' One of the Justices blurted out, 'Mr. Pringle, we listened with care to your statement of the case and you must take it for granted that we know some law.' 'Ah, your Honor,' said Pringle, 'that is just the mistake I made below and I am not willing to repeat it.' There was a smile as broad as the bench and he received undivided attention. Since that night, however, when I find myself about to meet Mr. Percy on the street I realize that I have forgotten something and turn back to find it in the first good hiding-place."

"What do you know about him, Doctor, and what business has he here?"

"As to his business here, I suspect that Kate can tell you more about that than I can, if she is willing to talk. The little that I know about him I got from Carson. By the way, I called to see Carson

this morning and found him getting along beautifully—Mr. Percy had just left. It seems that he and Percy were together in Europe some two or three years ago. Carson says he is a millionaire, a good fellow, and the champion talker of the universe. He is a *novus homo,* as our old friend Cicero would call him, and had no early advantages. His father was a poor man and a miner, but struck it rich, very rich, when his son was about eighteen years old. His father then undertook to educate him, but made the mistake of sending him to one of these third-rate colleges that turn out no scholars, but many degrees—M. A., D. D., LL. D.—in the effort to curry favor and bribe patronage. Well, he is now a member of Congress, and if he had Kate for a wife I have no doubt he would cut a wide swath in Washington society."

"Doctor, I don't think Miss Kate is for sale."

"Who knows? If there is anything impossible to predict, it is a woman's choice in matters matrimonial. A million dollars, twined about with congressional honors, is a bait so tempting that few will resist."

Hamilton was silent for a minute, then rose and said something about being tired after his day's work; that he would go to his rooms and try to get a good night's sleep. Dr. Blake leaned back in his chair and indulged in a quiet laugh. Talking to himself, he said:

"There are many kinds of fools, but of all fools, commend me to the man that is thoroughly in love with a woman. He is entitled to the prize—there

he is as blind as a bat at midday. Hamilton, however, ought to be kicked. Strange, he didn't find out he was tired before he came here. He will spend the night in chewing the cud I have given him, and in the morning he will complain of insomnia. Kate has about as much notion of marrying that walking dictionary as I have of preaching the gospel in Thibet—well I haven't thought of it."

The afternoon following, Hamilton met Kate walking with Mr. Percy near the First National Bank. Lifting his hat and bowing, he was passing when Kate stopped him with the remark:

"Dr. Hamilton, I leave for New York tomorrow. If you will give me a message to your friends it will add to the pleasure of the trip."

"This is rather sudden, is it not? I thought you had arranged to go with Livingstone?"

"So I had, but I have received a most urgent letter from Grace begging me to come and fill the position of general help. It is only three weeks, you know, until she becomes Madam Dalzell, and that time will quickly pass."

"As to you and Miss Grace, I have no doubt that it will, for, between your preparations and your confidences, time will not hang heavy on your hands. I am sorry that you didn't post me in time to frame some excuse for seeing you as far as Chicago or even farther. I fear you will weary of your long journey with no one but yourself for company. I forget who it was, but some one has said, 'When alone we are in bad company.' "

"I should think it very easy to frame an excuse," put in Mr. Percy. It seems to me that the lady herself offers the very best excuse."

"My experience and observation teach me that an excuse is never wanting when we really wish a thing," said Kate. "However, I will not be alone, as Mr. Percy will accompany me as far as Washington. From there to New York the journey is short, and I will telegraph Grace to meet me on my arrival. So, if you feel like an outing, turn everything over to Dr. Livingstone and go with us all the way, if you can get your consent."

"No, my place is here. As to Livingstone, I fear that Inez has got him into such a state of mind that I cannot trust him with our business — he might neglect it."

"Oh, I hope it is not so bad as that," said Kate. Dr. Livingstone seems to me to be very sensible in all that he says and does. He makes no effort to conceal his preference for Inez. She fought a little shy at first, but I believe she begins to like the situation. He has conducted the siege with a skill that would command the admiration of Vauban, and by perseverance and gradual approaches he has succeeded in running his parallels dangerously near the fortress. The flag of truce is often flying, and I take it for granted that the frequent parleyings betray the weakness of the defense and that Inez is meditating an unconditional surrender."

"Are you talking about Miss Dalzell?" asked

Mr. Percy. "If you are, I consider Mr. Livingstone a most fortunate man."

"Who knows?" said Hamilton. "Of all the earthly blessings, blindness to the future is greatest and the best."

"The snarl of the cynic is not becoming to Dr. Hamilton," put in Kate, "because it is foreign to his nature."

"Again, who knows? It is the part of art to conceal nature, and appearances are often deceptive and misleading. Costly clothes do not make the gentleman. A cynic may wear a smiling face, but, as he is more to be feared than desired, I will leave you with the wish that your journey to New York may be both pleasant and prosperous."

Kate's eyes widened as she looked him full in the face and said:

"Dr. Hamilton, you forget that it was I that stopped you in the hope of being the bearer of pleasant messages to the friends at your childhood's home, and I little thought that I was overstepping the bounds of courteous friendship."

"I beg forgiveness, Miss Kate, and admit that I merit your rebuke. To err is human—you know the rest. Please say to my old friends that I have many fond recollections of them stored away in the lumber-room of memory and that they are ever with me. Tell them anything good that you may have heard of me, only, I forewarn you, that in the telling you may damage your reputation for veracity."

As they turned away, Mr. Percy asked:

"What is the matter with that man?"

"Nothing more than is common, answered Kate. "Like most men of my acquaintance, he is troubled with a diseased imagination and is sadly in need of a large dose of perceptive powders."

CHAPTER XXVII

The ceremony that made Grace the wife of Dalzell had been performed and the wedding party had returned in due time to Denver. A day of rest was given, to be followed the next evening by a reception at the Dalzell mansion. Hamilton arrived late, to find the premises afloat in light. He quickly made his way to the center of the room, where Grace was standing, surrounded by congratulating friends. As he came up, she gave him her hand with the remark:

"You are late as usual. A bad habit and one that would have lost you your dinner with Napoleon. My first impulse was to punish you for not meeting us at the depot. But I knew you would fall back on that ancient excuse, hoary with age, of business before pleasure, and I have concluded to forgive you for the days of auld lang syne."

"Thank you! I am delighted to see that you are a follower of Talleyrand. You know he says that first impulses are best, but for that very reason they ought not to be carried out."

"I am sorry to see that you are so well read in Talleyrandic lore. If I followed a suggestion of that scamp, I assure you I did so without knowl-

edge. I look upon him as the greatest of frauds, and what he ever did to give him a respectable niche in Memory's Hall, I have never been able to learn. A libertine in a cassock, a hypocrite under a cowl, a terrorist and a hanger-on of kings, a traitor to all parties, a wit without humor, a statesman without a conviction, a mere vane to point the shiftings of political currents—"

"Hold on, Grace, what's the matter here?" broke in Dr. Blake. "Are you not exercising your matrimonial privileges a little early and beyond your bailiwick? You seem to be hectoring Hamilton with a vengeance. What has he been doing to awaken your matrimonial ire? He looks like a boy that has been caught poaching in the pantry and forced to stand in the corner as a punishment."

"He had the impudence to compare me with Talleyrand, the greatest scoundrel of the age; and, while I haven't whipped him, his looks show that he richly merits the rod."

"I am certainly cornered, and if I haven't been whipped I have been fearfully lashed with woman's most formidable weapon. As to my looks, they are merely those of sympathy for the future of Dalzell."

"What is that I hear about whippings, and lashings, and formidable weapons?" exclaimed Ada, joining the circle around Grace.

"Oh, a few of us who agree in sentiment," said Dr. Blake, with a twinkle in his eye, "were merely having a little side chat, discussing the great suc-

cess of Grant in whipping the rebels into a patriotic love of country. It was not intended for your ears, but you know the old saying about eavesdroppers. Now, we don't want any fireworks here to-night, Ada, so we will change the subject.

"Grace, you have no idea how Ada has been carrying on during your absence. A fellow has been out here in constant attendance upon her for a month. He went home only a few days ago. He spent the days in guiding her about the city and feeding her on fancy candy. He spent so much of the nights with her that he caused a row about the gas bill. Come, Ada, tell us all about it."

"Dr. Blake, did you ever hear—"

"No, I never did hear the like," he interrupted; "for when you begin that way I am in trouble."

"Well, did you ever hear of your fellow-countryman—he was possibly a kinsman of yours—who, immediately after the war, rushed down South to rejoice with the newly emancipated? I also heard that he hoped to fill his carpetbag, but that no doubt was a slander. He knew all about the negro, because he had read Uncle Tom's Cabin, the most truthful of stories and one that made known the inner life of the South with all the accuracy that the Arabian Nights revealed that of the Orient. He was a suggestion of linked sweetness long drawn out, and he had the appearance of having been brought up on Boston beans and wooden nutmegs. He was a walking magazine of interrogation points, and he exploded with every opportunity, like a bunch of fire-crackers. He was the

genuine article with a melodious utterance that suggested the crushing of pebbles. Well, this kinsman of yours landed in a Southern town during the night, and was out early the next morning to regale himself among the new-blown and odorous flowers that had recently unfolded themselves in the garden of liberty. As he was winding about, here and there, he met with a bare-foot scholar that had just returned from Grant's school of instruction where he had been filled full of love of country by shot and shell. Yank promptly called out, 'Good morning, sir," and bare-foot, as he went swinging along the street, answered, 'Morning.' 'I say, I see you are bare-footed; is that the custom about here?' Bare-foot stopped, looked his man over, took his measure, and with a grin replied, 'Wall, now, maybe some on us does, but most of us down in these parts tends to his own business.' "

Amid merriment, Dr. Blake said:

"And that you intend as an answer to the question of loving friends?"

"Dr. Blake is a wise interpreter."

"Good evening, Dr. Hamilton," said Kate, as she walked up in company with Dalzell. "Uncle Gus, are you and Ada quarreling? You are certainly the most obtuse pupil I have ever had. Ada is the same as a member of our family, and I have told you, time and again, that family quarrels are respectable only when conducted in the greatest privacy."

"And how about the school-marm that wields her ferrule in public?"

"Let him alone, Miss Kate," said Hamilton. "He isn't even bright enough to learn in the school of experience. Dalzell, my friend, allow me to congratulate you on becoming a benedict, and to say that you have drawn the capital prize in the matrimonial lottery."

"Your judgment, Hamilton, is unerring and your taste deliciously delicate. Who was it?—Wordsworth, I believe,—who said, 'A perfect woman, nobly planned—"

"That," interrupted Hamilton, "may be classic, but, like *et tu, Brute,* is somewhat worn. I prefer what Burke said of his wife."

"And what did Burke say?" asked Kate.

"He said he never had an outside care that didn't fall away and disappear as he crossed the threshold of his home."

"How do you know what Burke meant?" put in Dr. Blake. "I consider the remark equivocal. I have no doubt that many a poor devil of a husband can say as much. I feel certain that old Socrates could have said the same in all truth, and it may be that Dalzell will be able to tell you all about it in a twelve-month."

"If any man deserves a Xantippe, that man is Dr. Blake. I don't intend to stand here and submit to any such insinuations," said Grace. Dr. Hamilton, will you take me to the library and away from this Momus?"

"Stay, Grace, stay a minute and hear me for my cause—in poetry."

"Is Dr. Blake among the *vates?* Go on, and I will be silent that I may hear."

Dr. Blake then, with true pathos, repeated:

"'We have careful thoughts for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometimes guest;
But oft for our own
The bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.'"

Grace, glancing at Dalzell, playfully put her fingers to her lips, blew through them toward Dr. Blake, and said:

"Uncle Gus, if I had one that I could spare, I would give it to you for quoting those lines. Do you know they were written by a woman?"

"Of course they were written by a woman. Isn't she trying to excuse her morning temper? Listen to the opening lines:

"'If I had only known in the morning
How, wearily all the day,
The words unkind
Would trouble my mind
I said when you went away;
I had been more careful, darling—'"

"Shame on you, Dr. Blake! That is a heart poem, and the man who can mar its music has no more sentiment than a grindstone. Come on, Dr. Hamilton, I am going. I am afraid of such a man."

On reaching the library Hamilton said:

"Now, tell me all about your marriage and something about the friends who were present."

"All marriages are pretty much alike, as far as my observation goes. We had a preacher, of course. He went through the customary ceremony and asked the usual questions, to all of which I agreed with a mental reservation. I suppose the preacher got his fee, and judging from his flow of humor it must have been a good one. We had some relatives present and some special friends. There were the usual empty congratulations and the usual supply of silly compliments. I suspect there were the usual criticisms, and I have no doubt that some of my very dear friends were greatly surprised that I should throw myself away upon a Western hoosier. I believe there was something to eat. Now, I think of it, I know there was, for the invited guests refused to disperse until they had discussed the table comforts, eyed the cut glass, handled the silver and inspected the wedding presents. But you are familiar with such occasions. They only differ in degree, and I had rather talk about our New York friends and their doings.

After they had been talking for quite a while, Grace asked:

"Has Dr. Livingstone told you of his monumental impudence and how Inez met it?"

"Livingstone impudent to Inez? You astound me! You must be jesting! He has told me nothing. He seemed very much exhausted from his trip and I have hardly had a minute's leisure since his return, so that we have had very little conver-

sation, and that little only on general topics. Tell me about it."

"I will do so and you can judge for yourself. After the marriage, father insisted that we should stay with him two or three days, and—recuperate as he calls it. To tell the truth, I was more than willing, for I was very much worn after the preparation, the excitements and worries incident to such occasions. It was the third night after the marriage and we were to leave the next morning. Father is an early-to-bed man. Kate, complaining of a headache, had gone to her room, leaving Mr. Dalzell, Dr. Livingstone, Inez and myself below engaged in conversation. After a time, and I suppose it was natural under the circumstances, we found ourselves talking about courtships, love-making, marriage proposals and their manner. Several amusing incidents had been told, which we all enjoyed, when Inez remarked that she didn't have much respect for a timid man—he might be a pleasant acquaintance and a good fellow, but it showed a want of decision, an important element in character and very essential to success. She believed any man worth marrying, if he really loved a woman, would not hesitate to tell her so and ask her to put her hand in his for the journey of life. Dr. Livingstone was sitting next to Inez, and scarcely had she concluded, when he stretched forth his open palm and said, 'Miss Inez, I ask it for the journey of life!'

"You may talk of earthquakes and claps of thunder from cloudless skies, but nothing could

equal the shock. Mr. Dalzell and I were speechless and almost breathless. We could only look on and await results. It is impossible to conceive of the overwhelming confusion of Inez. For a moment her eyes were ablaze and her face aflame. She sprang to her feet and I thought she would rush from the room. Dr. Livingstone was very pale, but he rose up and confronted her with his outstretched palm. She hestitated, and you know what Addison says of the woman who deliberates. She looked around at Mr. Dalzell and me in a kind of helpless, childish way, then looked at Dr. Livingstone, and then — with an hysterical laugh, she placed her hand in his, sank back in her chair and hid her face in her hands.

"Mr. Dalzell went to her, put his arm around her, and with his hand under her chin he lifted her face up and kissed her, saying, 'My sweet sister, you are a brave little woman. None but a brave, honest woman could have gone through so trying an ordeal!' 'Oh, Albert!' exclaimed Inez, 'I surrendered unconditionally and I am so ashamed of myself! But it was such a surprise!—and then, I suppose his astounding impudence deserved some reward!' As she said this, I rushed in and was giving her a kiss and a hug, when I happened to look up and saw Dr. Livingstone still standing, and with all the appearance, as I thought, of a hungry man invited to a feast, but who was permitted to look only at the viands. I was amused, and laughing at him I said, 'Why are you standing there? You look, for all the world, like a great,

awkward schoolboy called up for correction. Sit down!' What do you suppose was his answer?"

"I haven't the slightest idea, but I hope he was equal to the occasion."

"No, you would never guess. His answer was, 'I am waiting to see, and wondering if there will be enough of her to go round.' "

Hamilton was shaking with merriment, but managed to blurt out:

"Three cheers and a tiger for Sid! I know that he is irrepressible when he gets himself going and in full swing. He really excelled himself. It was magnificent, and how I would have enjoyed it had I been present."

"But did you ever hear of such colossal impudence! I threatened him with the policeman unless he mended his manners.

"By this time Inez had recovered herself, and joined me in saying:

" 'Yes, send for the policeman and let him subside into his natural self in the station-house. He ought to be punished for taking advantage of an innocent and unsuspecting girl and shocking her out of her senses. He must be punished, and he shall be, if I have to get my mother to enter an objection on the ground that I was irresponsible at the time, and—'

"But," interrupted Dr. Hamilton, "did Dalzell have nothing to say to Livingstone?"

"Oh, yes, he indulged in some masculine complimentary nonsense about his strategy surpassing that of the Italian campaign—his daring exceeding

that of the Little Corporal at Lodi—and that, under the eye of Napoleon, it would have won a marshal's baton, and some more idiotic rubbish of that character.

"Now that I have told you about my marriage, its incidents and accidents, and the acting and doings of our old New York set, you must post me as to what has been going on here in Denver during my absence."

"I have been too busy for society, and I have attended only one or two functions since you left us, which is an indirect way of telling you that I am lamentably ignorant of all you want to know. There have been no marriages, no elopements, or scandals, so far as I know. Van Tromp is going to marry his German sweetheart and he will be a benedict before many moons. At present she is only on the outer edge of our set, but when he brings her in she will prove quite an addition. A woman, you know, rises or falls to the level of her husband. She is here to-night, and I hope, for Van Tromp's sake, you will give her attention."

"I have met her and I shall give her attention for her own sake. Mr. Dalzell is fond of her and speaks of her in high terms. But go on with your report."

"Well, I did watch Inez and Sid, until they went to New York, in the hope of having something to report to you, but it seems that you have got ahead of me in that affair. Of course Miss Kate and Inez have told you all the feminine gossip, and there you are much better informed than I am."

"For once you are right. A woman can see more and hear more in an hour than a man can in a day."

"And by always telling all they see and all they hear, they have no trouble in remembering it for the next comer."

"Certainly, why not? A woman is never selfish with her knowledge. Such an aspiration we leave to you Lords of Creation. And yet, I notice that the wisest and the best of you enjoy a dish of gossip with all the zest of feminine weakness. In fact, the real difference between us is, the women are honest and the men are a set of frauds. But tell me all about yourself. What have you been doing?'

"Well, I have been busy trying to complete the sanitarium; and I have performed several beautiful and delicate operations since I saw you. Would you like to have the particulars?"

"What a question! No, you can keep your knives and your saws and your bloody bones for your own private entertainment. You know very well to what I refer. You have not forgotten that just before I left for New York I took you under my special care and gave you certain prescriptions for your ailments. Now I want to hear results."

"I remember that you fed me on a few rainbows, but I am sorry to report that the diet was very disappointing. It was without nourishment and proved to be very unsubstantial and most unreliable."

"The prescription is all right, as I know from

experience, but you are not a trustworthy patient, and I believe you failed to follow instructions. The remedy I prescribed is a certain cure unless I failed to locate the disease. This sometimes, as you can readily recall, does happen, and since talking with, or rather at, Kate, I incline to the opinion that I did mistake the affected organ and that your trouble is splenetic."

"What did Miss Kate tell you about me?"

"Would you really like to know?"

"Anything that she may say is always a matter of interest to me."

"Really? Well, she had nothing to say, and for that reason I knew you had not followed my instructions. We were together only a few days, and in the hurly-burly of wedding preparations we had very little private conversation. The only gentleman she seemed disposed to talk about was Mr. Percy, who had been visiting in Denver. Did you meet him while he was in the city?"

Grace asked the question in the most indifferent manner, and as she asked it she seemingly lifted her hand to hide a yawn, but she had an eye on Hamilton all the time.

"Yes," said Hamilton, "it was impossible to avoid him. He was all over the town and everywhere else. There was no escaping him."

"Where did he come from and what kind of a man is he?"

"He came from California—but why do you ask me these questions?"

"In the first place, because I want to know. In

the second place, while you are weak when it comes to women, I have great confidence in your judgment of men."

"Did your friend Kate not tell you all about him?"

"She talked about him, more or less, but I had so many things on my mind at the time that what she said made very little impression."

"Miss Grace, women don't forget things of that nature."

"Ah! That is your opinion, is it? It may be that I have a shadowy recollection of what she said, but it is confused and unsatisfactory. It is your opinion of the man that I want, for I esteem you the best reader of men that I know. Why are you fighting shy of the question?"

"Because I half-way suspect you of some mischief; that somewhere up your sleeve you have a concealed dagger. The strategy of a woman is deep, very deep, and past finding out."

"You are a suspicious ninny. Being a married woman, I can say what I please."

"You didn't wait to get married to exercise that privilege."

"Well," said Grace, "you are beyond me tonight and we will let the question go. But there can be no harm in telling what his business was in Denver. You can't suspect me in asking that question."

"I was not in his confidence. If you will apply to your friend Kate I have no doubt she can furnish you with the desired information."

"What! Did he show Kate any special attention?"

"If following her everywhere that she went in the day-time and besieging her at her home in the night-time make marked attention — then, he showed her marked attention."

"You surprise me! I had no idea he played the devoted so openly. It was too bad, and I shall give Kate a good scolding for not taking me into her confidence. Did you meet him when calling on Kate?"

"I met him on two occasions, but found him in possession of the field and so strongly entrenched that I withdrew as soon as decency would permit."

"Why didn't you dislodge the enemy?"

"Miss Kate seemed to be satisfied and I had no right to make the effort. A lady's preference should be respected."

"You don't mean to say that Kate was giving him encouragement?"

"I can't say that, but I can say that I failed to see anything that indicated discouragement."

"Kate is familiar with the ways of society, and if she were not she is too true-hearted and lady-like to be discourteous and impolite in her home. As hostess she is never unmindful of duty."

"A millionaire and member of Congress is always sure of courtesy and politeness whether at home or abroad. In fact, this is a combination that few women can resist."

Now, thought Grace within herself, we are getting down to the core of the trouble.

"Is he cultured and entertaining in conversation?"

"He is a man of fine appearance and there can be no objection to his general manners. His education is evidently defective. He is a man of action rather than of learning. As to conversation—he has no idea what the word means. In quantity it is a deluge."

"Now that we have been talking over the matter," said Grace, "I do recall a few things that Kate told me about him, and from what she said I am thoroughly convinced of one thing."

"Miss Grace, I would like to hear the fact of which you are convinced."

"You allow yourself to get excited and forget that I am no longer Miss Grace. Under the circumstances, however, I will excuse you. Now to the fact of which I am convinced. It is this—that he has sense enough to understand his wants and courage enough to make them known. But we have lingered here quite a while. I am the bright particular star to-night, you know, and it will never do for me to absent myself too long from the company. Come on, we must return to our friends and finish our confidences some other time."

"Stop, Grace, just a minute!" exclaimed Hamilton. "I want to know what it was that Miss Kate told you about Mr. Percy."

As she walked on, Grace called back, "Are you coming?"

There was a smile of amusement on her face as she said, *sotto voce:*

"Men are such funny animals. I wonder if it will ever occur to him that he *did* answer that *question?* He so richly deserved it, that I could not resist the temptation to give him a little dig with the dagger that he thought he saw up my sleeve—just a little dig to give him something to think about when he goes to his rooms and to remind him of the bed of roses that Cortez prepared for the Aztec."

CHAPTER XXVIII

They found Livingstone conversing with Miss Seibert in German, discussing German literature in general and Goethe and Schiller in particular. Dr. Blake was circling the room and stirring up disputations and fun wherever he went. Van Tromp was arguing a question of science with Sue Maxwell; and Inez, like a good general, was keeping the whole field in view and giving assistance wherever interest seemed to wane.

Hamilton joined her and moved with her for a time from group to group. He saw Dr. Blake ensconced in a corner, surrounded by Grace, Kate, and Ada. The conversation seemed to be animated and it suited his purpose to let himself drift in that direction. As he approached them, Dr. Blake called out:

"Come here, Hamilton, I have just entrusted to these sympathizing friends of mine a secret which they have not suspected—that as usual I am afflicted with despondency. I have asked for a remedy and I want you to hear what these female doctors will prescribe. Now, Ada, we will listen to your prescription."

"I have never been troubled with low spirits and I cannot advise from experience. In theory, I

would recommend a change of scenery and intercourse with congenial friends."

"As to scenery, Ada, everything looks yellow to the jaundiced eye. As to congeniality, I can't conceive what possible help one low-spirited man would be to another suffering with the same trouble. If you had said a change of diet your prescription would have been worth considering. I think you must go to the foot of the class. Now Grace, we will hear you."

"I advise a trip to the East and yachting and sea breezes. I have heard that the breath of the sea is a tonic."

"Not so bad, Grace. The salt air is a tonic. But what about seasickness, with a touch of rheumatism from the damp air? Well, Kate, it is your turn at the bat. Give us a specimen of your medical lore."

"Uncle Gus, I am too good a physician to prescribe medicine for a well man. When I feel despondent or discouraged I have a never-failing remedy, so far as I am concerned, and I have no objection to telling you what it is—horseback exercise."

"There, I have known for some time that you are a little wrong above the eyebrows on that subject, but surely you would not prescribe horseback exercise for me—afflicted as I am with age and the blues?"

"I know of no reason why I should not prescribe it in your case. The remedy works like a charm with me, and why not with you?"

"Quinine is a good remedy for chills, but some people cannot take it. But, my lady, it is easy to see through your little game. You have an idea that your name figures in Uncle Gus's will and you are planning to give the old man a fall and a broken neck."

"Uncle Gus, the mettlesome swing of a beautiful horse pulling on the bit is the best of all tonics, and at the same time it is poetry in motion. Try it and be convinced."

" 'And the waves bound beneath me as a steed that knows his rider,' quoted Hamilton.

"That's the idea," exclaimed Kate. "I thank you, Doctor, for that quotation and I hope that you agree with me."

"Of course he does," said Dr. Blake, "and if he is in low spirits every time he goes scampering on Hero about the city and through the country it is safe to say that such is his normal condition. Kate, can't you give us, 'My beautiful, My beautiful—' "

"No," interrupted Kate. "That is Arabian nonsense and not to the point. But Grace Greenwood has written a little poem that fully expresses my feelings."

"I want to hear the poem that expresses the feelings of an enthusiast," said Ada. "A poem of that order is very rare. Can't you recite it for us? It must be afloat in all the colors of the rainbow."

"Please recite it, Kate," was Grace's added entreaty. "I know that you excel in that line and that your rendering will add a charm to the poem."

"I will do nothing of the kind to-night," said

Kate; "I recite only in private and for the entertainment of special friends. Here it would be too much in the nature of public speaking, and I always have had great respect for the teachings of St. Paul. However, if it will satisfy you, I will repeat to this corner audience for the benefit and instruction of Uncle Gus."

Then in a low voice, well modulated and with perfect accent, she began:

"'When troubled in spirit, when weary of life,
When I faint 'neath its burdens, and shrink from its strife,
When its fruits, turned to ashes, are mocking my taste,
And its faint scenes seem but a desolate waste,
Then come not near me, my sad heart to cheer,
With friendship's soft accent or sympathy's tear;
No pity I ask and no counsel I need,
But bring me, oh, bring me my gallant young steed.
With his high arched neck, and his nostrils spread wide,
His eye full of fire, and his steps full of pride.
As I spring to his back, as I seize the strong rein,
The strength to my spirits returneth again;
The bands are all broken that fettered my mind,
And my cares borne away on the wings of the wind,
My pride lifts its head, for a season bowed down,
And the queen in my nature puts on her crown.
Now we are off, like the winds to the plains whence they came.
And the rapture of motion is thrilling my frame.'"

"And then," interrupted Dr. Blake, "the horse came near running into a creek—"

At the interruption, Hamilton, who had lost himself in the perfect rendering and in watching the play of Kate's features, threw up his hand, and in a tone of marked annoyance exclaimed:

"Oh, Doctor, how can you! Do behave yourself and let Miss Kate finish."

But the Doctor gave no attention and continued: "Yes, he was about to get into the creek, but maanged to hold up, and galloped about for a time, kicking up pebbles—then he got away from the creek and pranced into a gulch, or cañon, or some such place—when he got out of the gulch, he found himself on a flat stretch and badly mixed up with the underbrush—and then he came to a ditch, I believe there was a ditch; wasn't there a ditch, Kate?"

Kate seized the opportunity and, lifting her head in a queenly way, she gave the closing lines of the poem:

"'Ho, a ditch! Shall we pause? No; the bold leap we dare,
Like a swift-winged arrow we rush through the air.
Oh! Not all the pleasures that poets may praise,
Not the wildering waltz in the ballroom's blaze,
Nor the chivalrous joust, nor the daring race,
Nor the swift regatta, nor merry chase,
Nor the sail, high heaving waters o'er,
Nor the rural dance on the moonlit shore,
Can the wild and the thrilling joy exceed
Of a fearless leap on a fiery steed.'"

"Very fair jingling for a woman," said Dr. Blake, "and I am not surprised that you horseback cranks call it poetry; but in my opinion Pegasus has never yet willingly submitted to a side saddle. Now, I don't propose to be outdone in this thing you call poetry, and if you will listen I will give you something worth hearing—the genuine article and full of the divine afflatus—suited to the home and suggestive to Inez, whom I see coming."

"Dr. Blake flirting with the muses? Will wonders never cease?" said Ada.

"He has always been great on fiction, Ada, and that you know calls for imagination and makes it akin to poetry," said Grace.

"I am curious to know his taste in poetry," was Hamilton's remark. "Give him a chance and let him unbosom himself."

"Taste! Hamilton, you anticipate me—you must be a mind reader. Well I hope Inez will see the point and so—here goes:

"'We may live without poetry, music and art;
We may live without conscience and live without heart;
We may live without friends; we may live without books;
But civilized man cannot live without cooks.
We may live without books—what is knowledge but grieving?
We may live without hope—what is hope but deceiving?
We may live without love—what is passion but pining?
But where is the man that can live without dining?'

"There, that is both poetry and sense—a combination that looks to business. Inez, isn't it about time to spread the festive board?"

"I am here to announce the festive board; to pair you off and show you where to sit. I see Albert coming for Grace; Dr. Hamilton will see that Kate has attention, and Ada falls to Dr. Blake."

Rising and bowing to Ada, he said:

"Mine ancient, most respected and, as Napoleon said of England, my most persistent enemy, let the bugles sing truce while we visit the delectable land."

When they found themselves seated in a com-

paratively secluded part of the room, Ada again opened the conversation by remarking:

"Dr. Blake's poetical quotation is from Owen Meredith, and I venture the assertion that it is the limit of his knowledge of all that author wrote. His literary taste is badly mixed with gastronomics."

"Yes, and only a man could make the subject poetical."

"I think you are mistaken, Doctor," remarked Hamilton; for Lady Mary Montague left a specimen superior to your text from Lucile. In my opinion it takes the prize on that subject."

"What, that woman with the dirty smock? Impossible!"

"Oh, the dirty smock was all in the imagination of that little stinging serpent, Pope," said Kate. "He was envious and therefore jealous, and, like the Turk, could bear no brother near the throne."

"Well, in his day," the Doctor replied, "he occupied the throne and could hold out the sceptre to whom he would."

"At one time," remarked Grace, "he was her personal and literary friend; but for some cause, unknown to me, they became estranged."

"The daughter of a duke, the wife of an earl, the wit and beauty of her day—she was a wonderful woman," said Dalzell. "All and all, I doubt if she has her equal among modern women. The cause of her rupture with Pope has never been properly settled. One story is that he made love to her and she laughed at him. Another is that he

wanted to kiss her and she slapped him in the face."

"And served the little hunchback right!" exclaimed Ada.

"Granting that you are right, she ought never to have encouraged him, as she undoubtedly did. She ought not to have forgotten her own line—'He comes too near, that comes to be denied.' "

"Pshaw!" said Dr. Blake, "let all that go. It is all a dead issue, and it is a waste of time to be fooling round among dead issues. Hamilton seems to think she wrote something worth listening to and I am all curiosity and attention."

"As you don't seem to know much about her, Doctor, I will tell you, before giving it, that she lived nearly all of her life in the public eye. I feel certain it will please you, for it looks to the trencher and boon companionship:

> " 'And when the long hours of the public are past
> And we meet with champagne and chicken, at last,
> May every fond pleasure that moments endear
> Be banished afar, both discretion and fear.
> Forgetting or scorning the airs of the crowd,
> He may cease to be formal and I to be proud.
> Till—' "

"You must excuse me, Hamilton," said Dr. Blake. "It is delicious, but, with the many temptations I see around me, I cannot wait and listen longer. It has been the rule of my life to meet temptations promptly. When I have come over and hidden away the many that now throng around me, I will be at your service even to the finish, be it

ever so long. If Lady Mary wrote those lines, she ought to have been seated on the throne beside Pope, and I don't blame him for loving her and wanting to kiss her."

The conversation had run on for some time in a light and merry vein, when Kate interrupted with the remark:

"Uncle Gus, I am not satisfied with your intimation that Lady Mary may possibly be the only exception to your general rule. What have you to say of Sappho?

"Very little, Kate, for the very good reason that there is very little of her left."

"Don't evade the issue, but meet it fairly. Where does she rank among poets? Let us have your opinion."

"As I said, there is hardly enough of her left to form an opinion. We have an ode to Venus which partakes of the Anacreon order, if I remember aright, and we have two or three fragments of something, but nobody knows what."

"Uncle Gus, if your literary taste was equal to your dodging ability, you would be beyond reproach. You mistook your true calling in life—you ought to have devoted yourself to politics, in which you would have proved a great success, because it is simply impossible to corner you. She was held in high esteem by her contemporaries and ancient historians."

"All things when old are good, Kate. Looking back only a hundred years, we talk about the giants in those days, when we have just as good men and

just as strong men now as were then playing their little parts on the arena of life. You have heard that no man is great to his own valet,—therein lies the explanation,—and I assure you that distance lends as much enchantment to the mental vision as it does to the physical vision."

"Of all wilfully perverse men, you head the list! I am not asking for your opinion, for I begin to suspect that you have no opinion to give, but I am asking for the opinion of her contemporaries—which brings me within your valet theory—and for the opinion of those who lived more immediately after her. If you know it, let us have it."

"I don't know that we can put much faith in the opinion of those old fellows. They tell us wonderful stories about the wonderful exploits of one Hercules, and we all know that—"

"What about their opinion of Homer?" interrupted Kate. Didn't they delight in his minstrelsy and proclaim him the poet?"

"Oh, yes. Many marvelous stories come down from those old fellows. For instance, they tell us about a musician that sang and played so sweetly that the birds would stop in their flight, the streams in their courses, and the cattle upon a thousand hills would follow him to listen to the melody—but I have yet to meet with anybody that believes it."

"But hasn't posterity confirmed the opinion that those old fellows, as you call them, entertained of Homer?"

"Yes, and again you have found the exception to the rule."

"But the same old fellows called Sappho the Poetess and the Tenth Muse; what about that, Uncle Gus?"

"Why was Sappho called the Poetess and the Tenth Muse? Well, I suppose there was some gallantry among those old boys, and as far as my acquaintance goes, she was the only woman of her day that attempted poetic scribbling, and it was very natural that she should be called the Poetess."

"Doctor," said Hamilton, "you know her writings were highly complimented by the ancient fathers. Solon was her contemporary, and, on hearing one of her odes recited, said he would not willingly die until he had committed it to memory. Longinus, in his treatise on the Sublime, cites passages from Sappho, and Aristotle and Plutarch speak of her in the highest terms, and—"

"There, Hamilton, that will do. Please withdraw your heavy artillery—the concussion is damaging to digestion—and let me fight it out with these blue-stockings."

"And," continued Hamilton, "she certainly had native genius, for she gave us the Sapphic measure, which has been followed by Horace and all lyric poets without improvement."

"That was in the nature of setting the fashion—that is woman's world, and there her genius is triumphant. No sane man will make denial."

"Granting that your view of woman's possibili-

ties is correct, can you tell me," asked Ada, "why the old boys represented the Muses as females?"

"Because poetry is made up of the unreal, the unsubstantial, the imaginative, the volatile, the fanciful, and—feet."

"Let me congratulate you, Doctor, on your mental feat—the exertion must have been very onerous and almost crushing—that opened up to your darkened mind the knowledge that woman is not earthly, but ethereal in her nature, and that she really, yes, really has feet."

"Well, Ada, you blue-stockings may have it all your own way. In fact, I know very little about Sappho—almost nothing—and as she has been dead for some three thousand years I have no desire to form her acquaintance or to get up a flirtation with her. I believe she ended her poetical career by leading into the sea from the Lucadian Rock, and if you callow literary fledglings of the female variety will only stop firing your air-guns at me I am more than willing for her to remain in her briny bed—I have no disposition to resurrect her or to interfere with her sporting with the mermaids."

"Doctor," said Dalzell, "you are again in error. The island of Lesbos gave to the world two Sapphos — one of Mytelene and the other of Ereus, and you confound them."

"You are right, Dalzell, and again I say—confound them. Haven't I admitted that I know nothing about the Sapphos? Haven't I admitted that they are dead and that I want nothing to do

with them? Haven't I surrendered? But here you are enfilading me with double-banked artillery. Don't you know it is disgraceful to fire on a flag of truce? Don't—"

"Dr. Hamilton," called Lawson from an adjoining table, "Miss Percival will take wine with you."

Hamilton, apparently not hearing the call, turned to Grace as if continuing a conversation. But Lawson repeated the call, and louder than before—so loud as to attract attention:

"Dr. Hamilton, Miss Percival will take wine with you."

Miss Percival was an amiable, vivacious girl; rather pretty, and a friend to Hamilton, with whom she was on very pleasant terms. As Hamilton lifted his head in answer to the second call of Lawson, he looked directly into her smiling face and eyes full of fun. She held in her uplifted hand a glass of wine, and playfully bowed in his direction, to which he responded:

"Miss Percival knows it would give me the greatest pleasure to comply with her every wish, and I know she is not aware of the fact that I have foresworn wine and all of its adjuncts. If she will reverse the miriacle and change the wine into water I will be delighted to pledge her in friendship till death do us part."

"What," exclaimed Lawson, in apparent great surprise, "will you publicly decline to take wine with a lady when she has requested it?"

During this exchange of words, a startled look

had crept into Miss Percival's face. She returned the glass of wine to the table and said:

"There is more in all this than I understand, and if I have been guilty of an indiscretion I beg pardon of Dr. Hamilton."

Inez, in passing, detected the trouble that was brewing and gave the signal for withdrawing. As they passed out, Dalzell said to Grace:

"I want you to understand that Lawson is never again to be invited to this house. Hamilton, I congratulate you on your admirable control of temper under great provocation. What do you think, Dr. Blake?"

"I know that Carson is traveling in Europe to repair his broken reputation as an athlete and for the benefit of his battered face. May he continue to do so for his country's good. But I think he has left his emissary behind and that the scene to-night was Carson in disguise. That is what I think of it."

They had reached the drawing-room,—the others passed in,—but Hamilton paused and said to Kate:

"I know it is a little early, but I must go to my den. I struggled to conceal my feelings and I hope with success, but the fact is I did feel keenly and still feel keenly the humiliation to which I was subjected. I have nothing in all the past to conceal, but it is irritating, almost beyond endurance, to have its errors and mistakes lugged into view upon occasions like the present. For the present, it has wholly unfitted me for society. Again, I

have never had any desire to be the much observed, and that would be my unfortunate position for the balance of the night."

"I too would much rather go home than join in that babel of tongues. But I suppose I must go in and put on my brightest smiles and my company manners."

"Not at all! There is no necessity for you to wear a mask to-night. If you will only consent, it will give me a real pleasure to walk home with you—the reaction would soothe me and cause me to forget the scene of the past hour and rid me of my gloomy thoughts. Come, now, and act the part of the good Samaritan and pour the oil of kindness over my wounds and my bruises."

"If you will assure me that I was not bidding for it, I will consider your offer," was Kate's smiling reply.

"Whoever dares to remotely intimate or suggest such a thing will find me resenting it with a resistless resistance. You were only giving expressions to the feelings of a sensible woman, who thoroughly understands the worth of the gatherings where Madame Grundy too often presides and who fully appreciates the restful retreat of her own happy home."

"I don't care much if you do consider it a bid," Kate said good humoredly, "for I do want to go home and I accept your offer. Before I go, however, I must let Uncle Gus know and I must make my excuses to Inez for leaving so early. I wonder where I can find her?"

"Hunt up Miss Inez and I will have the Doctor waiting for you when you return."

She was gone but a few minutes when she came back with her wraps:

"Uncle Gus, I am leaving. I have excused myself to Inez and I only want to see you and let you know that Dr. Hamilton will see me home."

Just at this moment Miss Percival was passing, and stopped to say:

"Dr. Hamilton, I have talked over the events of to-night with my brother. He has told me things of which I had never heard. At the time he was in a distant part of the room and he was not aware of the trouble. On hearing it, he became very angry and I had great difficulty in persuading him to let the matter rest. The desire to keep my name from the gossips alone influenced him. But I know now how deep was my offense and I entreat your forgiveness."

"Miss Percival, the innocent are never in need of forgiveness, and I know, as well as you do, that you are wholly innocent."

Hamilton was bidding Kate good night on the veranda, when she said:

"Dr. Hamilton, before you leave, I have a request to make of you."

"To make the request, Miss Kate, is to have it granted."

"It is that you will have nothing to say to Mr. Lawson about to-night's trouble. I hope I am not making too large a request."

"So far as I am concerned, Miss Kate, the trou-

ble is past and gone. I aspire to be a gentleman, and a gentleman is never vindictive. In making the issue on the occasion and in the manner that he did, I feel certain that he has hoisted himself with his own petard. Public opinion is the court to try the case, and when the court is on your side you had better keep still—the court will take care of itself."

CHAPTER XXIX

A week has passed. The evening shadows were falling fast and Hamilton was preparing to leave his office, when his phone rang. Answering the call, he received the following message from Dr. Blake:

"Ada, Grace, and Dalzell are here and we want you to come round and join us in the feast of reason and the flow of soul. For fear that kind of a collation may have no attraction for you, I will state that Kate expects to put us through a form of eating, as she intends to hand round something in that line, which you know is just about the little end of nothing very much attenuated and badly frazzled. No danger of dyspepsia or indigestion from overeating. So come along and be in a hurry about it as we are waiting to divide all these good things with you."

When Hamilton was ushered into the receiving-room about an hour after the phone message, he found the party engaged in an animated conversation. Dr. Blake interrupted it with the exclamation:

"Here you are at last. I told you to hurry and you have been all of an hour rushing over the tiresome distance of six hundred yards. I am sur-

prised that you ever reach your patients before the *post-mortem.* In the sweet by and by I hope, by some hook or crook, you will manage to slip within the pearly gates, but I know you will be found at the rear end of the procession, and I fear the closing gates will rustle the feathers of your wings as you enter."

"You ought, Doctor, to give a gentleman time to make himself presentable—and—"

"Hamilton, a gentleman is always presentable, and you surprise me—"

"Uncle Gus," interrupted Kate, "I protest against your further remark, and I make it in part for your protection. I fear you are venturing into *terra incognita.* You should confine yourself to subjects with which you are familiar, and you should always keep in mind that very appropriate saying—little boats should keep near the shore."

"Yes, and for years in and years out, and for many years, I have been hectored and bullied, brow-beaten and back-beaten, gimlet-bored and auger-bored by a certain young lady, called Kate Somers, who has persistently charged me with the manners of a barbarian because I now and then, in an unguarded moment, happened to interrupt another party when he was talking. To think my teacher should set such an example! I am overcome with mortification!"

Grace was laughing as she asked:

"What have you to say now, Kate, or are you dead upon the field of honor?"

"But," said Hamilton, "Doctor, you forget the

courteous preliminary of *en garde,* and you ought to remember that, when we fence for exercise or entertainment, the point of the foil should be lost in the button."

"Very true, Hamilton, but wholly unnecessary when you are on the defensive and parrying the sharp thrust of your adversary. There is no shield so invulnerable as self-complacency. Achilles had his vulnerable spot, but Kate has none, and she knows she has an all conquering weapon that has never yet been blunted by defeat. You have heard of the Damascus blade of Saladin, and that the most feathery of silk handerkerchiefs, tossed into the air and allowed to flutter down and settle along its edge, did not rest upon it as it parted in twain. That blade is not comparable to the keenness of a woman's tongue. By way of explanation. I had been stirring up the animals before you came in and you found them in a bellicose humor."

"Doctor, you will have to explain your explanation before I can understand the *casus belli.*"

"Hamilton," said Dalzell, "the doctor has shocked the animals, as he calls us, by declaring war on all religious denominations. Not one of them is good enough for him, and, like Mahomet, I suppose he will soon be going about proclaiming a new faith and will furnish us with another period for the reckoning of time, for I know his suave manners and winning ways will lead to a second Hejira."

"Dalzell, that statement is true as far as it goes, but it is not a correct statement, because, as made,

it is misleading. I find no fault with their religion, and, instead of none of them being good enough for me, I have never yet seen the man that I thought good enough to belong to one of them."

"All this may be beautifully transparent to you, Doctor," said Hamilton, "and to the rest of you animals, but to me it is about as clear as mud. It seems that you all agree and yet you do not agree. Won't some one of the animals enlighten me?"

"Dr. Hamilton, I will tell you," said Grace. "These men are eternally sparring and nagging and imagine themselves entertaining and funny, when in reality they are boring and stupid. Uncle Gus thinks there ought to be one grand and universal church; whereas, the rest of us think it a wise provision of Providence that there are various denominations of Christians with different forms of government; because, as you know, we are all differently constituted and all of us cannot view things from the same standpoint and see them in the same light."

"Now, Grace, you haven't improved on Dalzell's statement—not even a little bit—for I fully agree with you in all that you have stated."

"Well, then," cried Grace, "what in the name of common sense have we all been wrangling about for the last hour?"

"Merely a little misunderstanding, Grace, which causes about nine-tenths of our wrangles and perhaps ten-tenths of our troubles."

"Well," said Hamilton, "there seems to be a

distinction somewhere among you without any real difference."

"There, Hamilton, there, you have hit the nail squarely on the head without knowing it. That is just what I think the various denominations ought to realize. They all admit it in theory, but they do not act upon it and together. They admit that there is but one saving religion; that there is but one church as instituted by our Saviour; that they are all striving for the same goal; that there are just as good Christians in one denomination as you can find in another; that they all have but one common enemy, and yet we can, now and then, catch them trying to rob each other by proselyting; and, now and then, we hear hints, allusions, reflections, intimations, all going to signify that there is something wrong elsewhere; and they wrangle, and fume, and fuss, and fret, over what they themselves admit to be non-essentials. Nay, more, even from the sacred desk there sometimes come subtle innuendoes, subdued carpings and refined criticisms of the absent brother. These things are repellant—they engender estrangement—they do not form a good soil for the growth of brotherly love, and it is with these things, and these things only, that I find fault. Why can't they make a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and moor the old ship of Zion in the haven of the millennium?"

"It can't be denied, Doctor, that the troubles you have named do exist and that they have a most unfortunate effect. On Sunday from the pulpit

we hear that love is the fulfilling of the law and from the pew we hear the amen. The rest of the week the teacher and the laymen loose themselves in the world—criticise and backbite each other and mankind in general just as severely and just as unreservedly as do the unregenerate. They eagerly scheme for the vantage ground; they zealously plot to pile up profits, and the non-professor, comparing himself with the professor and seeing but little if any difference, is satisfied with himself and hears with dull ears the dulcet pleadings of the sonorous Sunday sermon. Theory is the product of dreamland, and you might as well expect a man to satisfy and fill himself by looking at a feast, as to expect theory to accomplish any good and useful thing until it is put into active, working order.

"You are right, Hamilton, when all roads lead to Rome, in the end what matters it which one we take? Each denomination is journeying to the Heavenly City where all is brotherly love and everlasting joy, and it does seem to me, instead of backbiting and bickering here, each should be constantly engaged in sending words of cheer to the other across the narrow, dividing lines. Now, there is our Baptist brother—a good fellow. He is on his way to the Eternal City and he wants you to go with him. But he insists that you must go by the water route and, if you decline to ship aboard his yacht, you may go to ——. Well, he refuses to hold communion with you here, although he admits that he expects to be with you

in the blissful beyond and to sit down with you in an unending feast of love in the happy hereafter.

"To onlookers the difference between the Presbyterian and the Methodist is very marked. The Presbyterian falls and denies it—the Methodist falls and admits it—that is the real difference. I believe they call it backsliding. It was only about a year ago I overheard one young lady ask another, 'Are you a member of the church?' and was answered, 'I did join the Methodist Church, but I slid.'

"The denominations are frequently firing paper bullets of the brain at each other about election, predestination, foreordination, foreknowledge and free agency, but it is all words—mere words—idle words. There is too much reasoning from the human standpoint. With Deity there is neither a past nor a future, but everything is present, and the moment of birth and the moment of death are, as to Him, one and the same. He has prepared a House of Many Mansions. He has provided the means for you and for me to get there. There is no coercion. He simply places the means at our disposal and leaves it to us to make our choice. Being omniscient, as we believe, He knows whether we will use or abuse the means. In other words, He knows what choice we will make. He sees the end from the beginning, for both are present before Him—there can be no mistake.

"Looking at it, then, from the standpoint of Deity, the end is fixed and certain and, in my opinion, the name of this certainty is wholly immaterial

and a matter of no moment. And yet the preachers of these denominations, in their Sunday sermons and before their several congregations, will pitch and prance, rip and rear, tear their hair and claw the air, confusing the minds of their hearers, awakening doubts, enkindling feelings of distrust, undermining brotherly affection, preventing unity of purpose, destroying oneness of action, and making the impression upon their hearers that the other fellow is on a broad road that leads to a certain very tropical country of which we have all heard—and all about what? A name, humanly speaking, for a thing or an event, or whatever you please to call it, that is just as certain as that Deity is omniscient."

"Hold, Doctor," exclaimed Hamilton. "You have abused these denominations long enough unless you were better versed in their doctrines and held sounder views. Our Puritan fathers would consider you quite a degenerate. You are decidedly heterodox. But you must be sound somewhere. Try the Episcopalians. Miss Ada is of that persuasion and I have no doubt you can entertain her with some original views."

"I don't know that my views would meet the full approval of either Calvin or Wesley, nor do I care, for I am satisfied they rest on the bed-rock of common sense. I do not belong to that class who think that these two church magnates knew everything. The world moves, and to-day we have men among us whose piety is unquestioned, of just as much ability and more learning, and I fail to see

why their opinion should not command as much respect. It is folly to suppose that wisdom begins and ends with any one man, or set of men, past, present, or to come.

"But you said something about Episcopalians. Well, they constitute the finest social club in all the world. Forty-day Christians they are sometimes called. If all the members merit the name, it is certainly a great improvement upon many that belong to other denominations. Yes, Ada is a member of that club and, having swallowed the thirty-nine articles, she confidently believes that it occupies the ante-room to paradise with only a very thin partition between, and that St. Peter stands at the door solicitous to welcome in the members."

"Well," said Ada, "is that not more satisfactory than the setting up of a mortgage lien upon the place that you Presbyterians claim to have?"

"You forget, Ada," put in Kate, "that the mortgage was foreclosed, as the lawyers say, some nineteen hundred years ago—the place purchased, and all we have to do is to accept, go in and enjoy the home that is offered to us."

"Grace," exclaimed Ada, "you are a member of the club and you must fall in line and help me to battle against this coalition of Presbyterians."

"I hear the Macedonian cry, Ada, but I am no longer able to respond to the call."

"What do you mean, Grace? I do not understand you."

"I mean that I no longer consider myself a

member of the finest social club in the world, as Dr. Blake calls it, and that I shall withdraw from membership among the forty-day Christians."

"You give results without stating the cause, and I ask again, what's the matter that you can no longer answer my call for help?"

"When I married Albert I knew that his mother and Inez were members of the Presbyterian Church and that it is the church of his choice. The husband is the head of the family, and until the woman can look upon the man in that light and say with Ruth, his people shall be my people, she is not ready nor is she capable of discharging the duties of an affectionate wife. That in effect is precisely what she promises to do when she takes the marriage vow and leaves the paternal home,—to make his people her people,—and unless she is willing to do so she had better remain a spinster. She has no right to enter a family, united in sentiment and affection, as a kind of dividing line. The line may be invisible, but, say what we may, necessarily it is felt. Furthermore, I agree with Dr. Blake, that there is but one religion, and with Shakespeare that there is nothing in a name."

"It is no use to argue with an infatuated woman, and to do so in the presence of Mr. Dalzell, who is sitting there clothed with a beatific smile, would be inexcusable."

"Please, please," stammered Dr. Blake, "please let up a minute. I want to get my breath and recover from the shock. Thank you, Grace! Dr. Blake and Shakespeare cited in the same breath!

That is conclusive of the argument and renders further debate unnecessary. I knew I deserved it, but it is so hard to impress our contemporaries with our true merit that I had begun to fear the public would have to wait for my epitaph before finding out what a truly good and great man I am. The intertwining of my name with that of Shakespeare, however, fixes my rank and places me among the immortals.

"After hearing Grace upon the duties of wifehood, I incline to the opinion that the West Pointer was not so very far wrong in his calculations."

"I suppose all West Pointers learn to make calculations, but I haven't the slightest idea to what you refer. You must specify."

"A fellow who learned to figure up at West Point has been making calculations as to the coming of the millennium. He fixed the time, but it has passed; so he must have slipped up somewhere in his figuring. I was thinking, however, if he could only hear you on the duties of the good wife, he could consider your views almost a verification of his calculation, and in them see the dawning of the much-desired time. If you could only get your views in working order among wives—"

"Pshaw! Uncle Gus, do hush!" interrupted Kate. "You are trying our patience overmuch. For an hour you have been wandering in paths unknown to you,—talking about church doctrines and church differences,—and now you are ready to discuss matrimonial matters in detail and to tell us what are the requisites of a good wife. I have

noticed frequently that it takes the unmarried party to lay down the rules and regulations for the happy family, and that the childless party is always brimming over with information for the parent and can tell him just how he ought to rear his children. These are the favorite topics of crusty and disappointed bachelors and of hopeless and angular spinsters. Of the two, I don't know which is the greater nuisance to society."

There was a general laugh, and Hamilton said:

"Doctor, I know you are down and badly disfigured, but as umpire I will withhold the count until you are again upon your feet."

"You can count me out, Hamilton. Had I known she was so familiar with the topics and so cunning of fence, I'd seen her—"

"No, I set up no claim to information on either topic—in fact I have none. The difference between us, Uncle Gus, is, I admit my ignorance, while you—but let us change the subject."

CHAPTER XXX

"I hear," said Kate, "that old man Green, who died the other day, left in his will fifty thousand dollars for the purpose of establishing a school for the poor children of the city."

"That is correct," said Mr. Dalzell. "His bonds, stocks, and moneys were on deposit with us and we have been duly notified to that effect."

"Who and what was Mr. Green?" asked Grace.

"He was a very old man, up in the eighties—a man of large means and plenty of poor kin."

"And to that, Dalzell," said Dr. Blake, "you can add that he was a miser and that he was never known to do a charitable act in all his long life. It would have been impossible to persuade him to lend the city of Denver so much as a nickel if, by so doing, it would have secured for the city the re-establishment of the Garden of Eden in all its blissful beauty and pristine purity, without receiving a first mortgage on the City Hall to keep him safe in making the loan. As a patriot and a man of public spirit, he did not measure up to a point which, mathematicians tell us, is without length, breadth, or thickness. What do you think of such a man, Hamilton?"

"That he is of more use to his fellow-men dead

than when living. I have very little respect for mortuary gifts of the Green character."

"I don't see why?" said Kate. "The money could not be put to a more useful purpose, or where it would be likely to bring a greater benefit to the community and the State at large."

"I agree with you as to the use to which the money is put, but my remark had no reference to that view of the matter. I was thinking only of the giver. My opinion is that generosity and liberality have very little to do with the gift, but that it is grounded in pure and unadulterated selfishness—a desire on the part of the donor to erect a monument to himself and perpetuate his name at the expense of the person to whom the money rightfully belongs. Hence, my want of respect—" Here Hamilton was interrupted by the appearance of a servant with a silver waiter, on which was a card.

The servant said, "Mr. Percy to see Miss Kate." There was a quick exchange of glances that sent the blood into Kate's face, but she told the servant to turn on the light and show Mr. Percy to the parlor.

Dr. Blake sprang up, exclaiming, "To your tents, O Israel! The Philistines be upon thee, and the enemy has possession of that jawbone! Ada, you are at home here and know where to find your hiding-place. Dalzell, you must look after Grace. Hamilton, come with me to my den where I can take a nervine and furnish the cigars."

CHAPTER XXXI

Mr. Percy was on his way to Washington, but he lingered several days in the city. His appearance upon the scene of action did not contribute to Hamilton's sociability. The object of Mr. Percy's visit was well understood, and Hamilton allowed himself to be influenced by two phantoms of the brain: First, he imagined that Kate must have known of Mr. Percy's coming; second, that his visit was acceptable, to say the least, or he would not loiter so long on his way to Congress.

When anything went wrong with Hamilton; when he was distrait, distressed or depressed, he always turned for relief to hard work. To all appearances he became absorbed in his profession. True, he was not altogether forgetful of his social duties, but his voluntary calls and his responses to invitations were manifestly of a perfunctory character. His manner in society was always courteous and affable, but hung round with repression and reserve. There was a want of spontaneity and sparkle in his conversation—leaning too much to things learned and suggesting the measuring of calico with a yardstick.

And so days slipped into weeks, with Hamilton devoted to duty.

In the meantime, Inez and Livingstone had married and were living in an Eden of their own, and as happy as the first pair before mother Eve had tasted of the tree of knowledge. The sanitarium had been finished and all the appointments completed, and it was filling with patients and nurses under the general supervision of Livingstone. It was on an afternoon in the month of June, when Grace had gone with her liege lord, that she closed a conversation with Hamilton, saying:

"You might as well stop your corkscrewing, pumping, and boring, for you will never strike oil. I don't pretend to have any knowledge of Kate's affairs and, if I did have, I am not the one to betray them or play traitor to her confidence. I have no doubt that you would like to know just what she thinks of Mr. Percy, and especially of what she thinks of Dr. Hamilton, but you have failed to take the course that leads to knowledge."

"Well, I am willing to be advised. What course ought I to take?"

"I recommend the mushroom test for your consideration."

"I am puzzled to understand what you mean by the mushroom test."

"What! Lived in Paris for years, fed on mushrooms, and not know the certain test for telling a mushroom from a toadstool! I cannot believe it! Surely you are quizzing me!"

"Yes, I have lived in Paris and fed on mush-

rooms, but I am not quizzing you. I assure you I am wholly ignorant of your test."

"The test is a very simple one. You eat, and, if it is a mushroom, you enjoy it and you are all right. If it is a toadstool, you are poisoned and you die. The eating is the test."

"No ordinary danger for the inexperienced," said Hamilton.

"It is by eating that you gain experience, my friend, and you may skirmish around for the balance of time, and you may try to catch the flavor of the mushroom in this way or that way, but you will never realize its relish without eating it—try as you may. Now for a word of application, as the preacher says:

"'He either fears his fate too much,
Or his desserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To win or lose it all.'

"Having furnished you with a mental cud, I will leave you. I am tired of teaching a pupil so dull. Good bye."

Two or three days later, Dr. Blake had been driving with Hamilton, and as they were about to separate he remarked:

"I see that the long session of Congress is drawing to a close."

"I had not noticed," replied Hamilton. "I have been so busy of late that I have given that body but very little attention. What have they been doing?"

"Yes, they have fixed the day of adjournment—only ten days off. They have been doing about what they usually do. They have appropriated and divided out the treasury and provided for its refilling with a view to future appropriations and divisions. Having done this, they find themselves about out of business and they have agreed to adjourn and await the coming in of revenue."

"I suppose, then, it will not be long before we will have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Percy?"

"I don't know about that? What makes you think so?"

"Oh, nothing in particular. I am only judging the future by the past. I have observed that he makes this city his resting-place to and from Washington, and for reasons no doubt perfectly satisfactory to himself."

"I suppose I understand your insinuation. If you really wish to meet Mr. Percy, I fear you will be disappointed. I am in nobody's confidence and I am not telling tales out of school, but I am satisfied Kate, the last time that he was here, gave that specimen of animated emptiness to understand that there was no resting-place for him at the Somers mansion. So, as this is not his direct route home, if you have business with him, or really desire the pleasure of his companionship for a few days, I advise you to send him a telegram to that effect."

CHAPTER XXXII

The fishing season was on, and Dalzell went to see Hamilton to get him to join a fishing party.

"Hamilton, you know it is the season when the law turns the followers of Isaak Walton free to roam the streams. I have received a letter from my friend, Jack Crawford, asking me to come to his ranch with a company of my own selection and enjoy the pleasure of lifting the trout from his streams. I am out trying to make up a party of congenial friends, and if you will join us my list is complete."

"But who and what is your friend, Jack Crawford?"

"That I call him my friend ought to be sufficient. However, I will tell you that he is one of the most companionable of men. A man of comfortable fortune, well educated, but somewhat of an eccentric, and delights in the free and easy and do-as-you please life of a rancher. He is the owner of a large and valuable ranch, and his picturesque nest of a home, situate in the finest section of all Colorado, is presided over by a regular little love of a wife, who charms with her smiles and wins with her wit."

"Love in a cottage," said Hamilton, smiling.

"Tell me whom you have chosen to go with you to this home of love, laughter, and song."

"The truth is often spoken in jest, and you will find it, Hamilton, just the place you have described. Livingstone declines—says he has a contempt for the memory of our friend Isaak Walton, whose chief pleasure seems to have been the watching of the death struggle, no respect for the science of angling, and no piscatory taste until the real article is 'done to a turn' and placed before him. He says, however, that you are just the man for the business—that you can sit in the shade of a tree and watch the line all day, and without so much as getting a nibble you return at night-fall feeling that you have had a day of glorious sport."

"Some men are never less alone than when alone," commented Hamilton.

"Inez," continued Dalzell, "of course refuses to go without Livingstone. The party will consist of Grace and myself, Ada and Dr. Blake, Kate and yourself. Come, say that you will go. You have been hard worked and seemingly on the sulking list of late, and a week's outing will do you good."

"Your selection, Dalzell, is all that I could ask. But a week's fishing! I think you must excuse me! Our host would weary of us—we would weary of our host, and we would grow weary of each other. Familiarity is a foe to friendship. Think of being cooped up in a country house for a whole week and angling the only diversion! The very thought of it is enough to give a social man the syncope!"

"You don't know what you are talking about, Hamilton. Jack has a library well stocked with both light and heavy literature; he has a billiard table the equal of any in this city, and even you will find him no mean antagonist. His wife has a splendid piano, and there shall be music and dancing, if you wish it, for she is an expert, and Jack sings a bass that you will enjoy."

"Your picturesque nest of a home, Dalzell, must indeed be a perfect paradise, or are you drawing on your imagination and amusing yourself with word painting in order to excite my curiosity?"

"I am doing nothing of the kind. I am only trying to describe what I have seen and heard; and, if you will only go with us, you will find that the half has not been told you—that the reality surpasses the painting."

"Every prospect pleases, Dalzell, and my nerves are clamoring for a rest. I now think that you can add me to the list, but I will let you know to-morrow whether you can depend on me."

Here they were interrupted by Dr. Blake, who came to them wearing a smile as broad as his face. Dalzell said:

"Let us enjoy it with you, Doctor, for I know by that smile that you have got something that is good."

"I don't know, Dalzell, that you can appreciate it, for you have been a banker and a money lender from your youth up; but, having passed through the debtor stage myself and sometimes without so

much as a sou in my pocket, I can assure you that I did enjoy it to the full and through and through. I was talking with Bill Briggs only a few minutes ago. You know Bill is a man of comfortable fortune, but it seems to be a part of his religion not to pay a debt without first being dunned. Even then, he don't seem to be in much of a hurry about it.

"As I came up to him, Bill received two statements. One from Mrs. Chapin's millinery establishment and the other from Johnson's jewelry store. It seems that Mrs. Briggs had been attending to business. Bill said to the bearers, 'All right, boys.' They lingered for a time, but he had nothing more to say to them. After they had gone, Bill, in a casual way, told me of the statements, and added, 'These people must think I am a circulating money mint and that I coin the genuine article as I walk through the streets. I am disgusted with their perpetual persistency and I most heartily wish we had the Arctic regions with us—or rather their days and nights.' I asked him what he meant, and he explained by saying:

" 'I am told that up in the Arctic regions the days and nights are each six months long. If it were only so here, it would be so comforting, when a party comes round with what he calls his statement, just to say to him—call round to-morrow and I will settle with you. A fellow would have time to rest and enjoy a nap between duns.' The idea was an oddly novel one to me and struck my funny bump.

"But what about the fishing excursion, Dalzell? Has that little piece of rebel electricity, Ada Stuart, agreed to go?"

"Yes, and so has Hamilton. The party is complete. I will notify Jack of our coming and he will meet us at the depot with conveyances. It is only a half day's drive to his ranch, and the beautiful scenery through which the road runs will linger with us ever after."

Hamilton found the Crawfords admirable hosts. We speak of entertaining as an art. This is a mistake, for it is founded in nature—a nature forgetful of self and causing the visitor to forget that he is not at home. The true host, like the true gentleman, is born. Each is the product of an unselfish heart from which kindliness flows as naturally as waters gush from their hidden fountains—the handiwork of nature.

Angling was the business of the morning. The afternoon was spent by the members of the party in mirth and jollity and with all the abandon of children let loose from school. The evening was for music and song, intermingled with wit and repartee, like the flashings of the fire-fly. But the last day of the excursion had come and to-morrow they must quit this carnival of pleasure and return to the whirr of wheels and the busy hum of their city homes. As they were leaving for the trout pools, Hamilton asked Kate:

"Do you really care to fish this morning?"

"No, I do not. I think I am sufficiently tanned

to claim a healthy hue, and I would prefer to loll on the grass and rest in the shade."

"What say you, then, to taking the chess-board and men along to while away the day?"

"Do so, and I shall enjoy the game if you will let me win."

A tree of a century's growth stood near the stream. Its wide spreading-branches would shadow a troop of cavalry. Underneath was a carpet of grass of luxuriant growth. No better place for the chess tournament could be found. The first game was long and skilfully played to a draw. The second game was begun, and Kate soon detected that Hamilton was not playing with his usual skill. It was not long until the checkmate came. It was a short game. In the meantime, Dr. Blake and Ada had come to a near-by pool and were devoting themselves to the habitants.

The pieces had been placed for a third game, when Hamilton, sweeping them from the board, said:

"Miss Kate, there is another game that I wish to play and one in which you hold the controlling cards."

Without thinking she innocently asked:

"What game is that?"

Not receiving an immediate answer, she looked up and was startled to find his face pale, and every feature set with determination.

"Miss Kate, it is commonly known as Cupid's game. It was instituted in Eden and is the one blessing that has come down to us from the Gar-

den. Miss Kate, I love you and I want you for my wife."

Before he had finished, her face was aflame and her eyes had gone down. She did not answer, and he continued:

"I have loved you every day since the day of the railroad wreck. I did not know it at first, and when the truth began to dawn upon me I thought to brush it away, as I had done many a time before. I have surprised and shocked you with my bluntness, but, Miss Kate, the truth is best told in simple words."

"You shall have an answer, Dr. Hamilton, but do not press for it at this time."

"The fact that you are apparently willing to consider the question permits me still to hope. I know that much of my past is hideous, but remember that I have nothing to conceal and Livingstone can tell you anything that you would like to know."

"I know all of your past that I care to know, and I tell you frankly that it does not enter into the question. We go home to-morrow. The next day I must rest. Call in the evening and I will manage in some way, as opportunity offers, to give you an answer without the cruelty of requiring you to again put your question."

An exclamation from Ada attracted their attention. Looking, they were just in time to see her struggling with a two-pound beauty. She had lifted it from the water and Dr. Blake was in the act of reaching out to take the line. The fish was whirling and twirling, and wiggling and twisting;

it tore loose from the hook, and falling in the edge of the water—it escaped. The comical expression that Ada wore was beyond description, and Kate and Hamilton, forgetting their personal situation, joined heartily in the amusement of the moment. Dr. Blake managed to assume a tombstone appearance and an affidavit face, but his eyes were fountains of fun and his diaphram was in convulsions. For a full minute not a word was spoken, when Ada, in a pleading tone, said:

"Doctor, please say it for me! Please, Doctor, say it!"

The doctor could contain himself no longer, and rolled on the ground, shaking with laughter. When he could get his breath, he asked:

"Ada, what is it you want me to say?"

"Oh! you know, Doctor. Say it, and don't be so long about it! Say it quick, for I must have some relief!"

"How can I say it, Ada, when you won't tell me what to say?"

"Doctor, you know what the occasion calls for and you know how to say it! Your sex has a monopoly of such sayings, while mine is forbidden to infringe upon your rights. So hurry up and say it and save me from an untimely death!"

"Ada, did you ever hear the joke about the man and woman racing for the train that left them behind?"

"If you don't want me to give up the ghost, don't inflict upon me, in this the hour of my suffering, one of your innumerable and pointless jokes.

Doctor, it is your privilege to say it and I am waiting on you. Please say it, doctor, and the next time you ask me, I will say—*yes.*"

"Let me tell the joke. I think you will see the point and appreciate it. A man and a woman, strangers to each other, each with a grip in hand, were making for a railroad train. They saw the train begin to move, and put on their best speed, only touching the ground here and there in high places. They reached the road just in time to be too late—the train was moving off with increasing speed. Each looked on for a minute, panting from exertion and lost in thoughts unutterable. As the train disappeared in the distance, the man, forgetful of the woman's presence, said:

" 'Damn that train!'

"To which the woman instantly replied:

" 'Thank you, sir!' "

"A fellow-feeling make us wondrous kind. Thank you, Doctor! I can understand and enter fully into that woman's feelings. It is the best joke I ever heard you tell, and," with a sigh as of great relief, "it has had a most soothing effect."

"Well, Ada, I suppose there is nothing for us to do now but to appoint the day and send for the parson?"

'I don't know about that, Doctor, because you went round the house to get in at the back door. True, you did say it, but in a very mild and indirect way without the force and vim of a man who felt and really meant what he said. And, then, Doctor, you haven't asked me—yet."

The evening shades of the appointed day had come, and Hamilton was not in a happy frame of mind. He was restless, wandering to and fro, here and there about his room. Why is it that the man who has moved fearlessly forward upon the flame of the rattling rifle and amid the roar of death-dealing artillery, will shrink from meeting the woman he loves to hear her simple answer of—Yes or No? Let other dreamers solve the question."

Hamilton completed his toilet with care, and went. As he approached the Somers mansion he saw that lights were on in the drawing-room and knew that he was expected. Entering the hall, he saw Kate standing underneath the chandelier. There was a flush on her face and a light in her eye as she advanced to meet him, and, holding out both her hands, she said, as he took them:

"Dr. Hamilton, you have your answer."

CHAPTER XXXIII

Two years have come and gone. On the veranda of the Somers home we see Dalzell and Grace standing with Kate. By Kate's side is a great Newfoundland with a coat of spotless white —the gift of Hamilton to his wife. As they watch the street there is expectancy in the look.

"Kate, why did Dr. Hamilton go to Chicago?" It was Grace who asked the question.

"Among Chicago's millionaires there is a man by the name of Sellers with whom Dr. Hamilton toured Europe and Egypt. It seems that this man has some serious trouble, and when informed that a dangerous operation was absolutely necessary he said that nobody should perform it but Dr. Hamilton. He telegraphed here and was informed that he must come to the infirmary. It was impossible for him to come, and his wife telegraphed appealing to the long-ago friendship. That, you know, is Dr. Hamilton's weak point. Three days ago he telegraphed me that the operation had been successfully performed and that he would be home to-day. It seems to me that it is time for him to be here, or am I nervously anxious?"

Dalzell looked at his watch and answered:

"No. If the train is on time, he will be here in a few minutes."

He had scarcely spoken, when the clacking clatter on the macadam of swift-coming horses was heard. The vehicle swung to the gate and Hamilton sprang to the ground. The Newfoundland went barking and bounding to him, and, as he rapidly approached the stoop, Kate hastened down the steps and glided into his arms.

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